

SKATABASIS
The Rise and Fall of Kinesias
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For Lawrence Bliquez
who inducted me into the mysteries of Aristophanes

Introduction*

Kinesias was a poet of the dithyramb, one of the few native Athenians to achieve prominence in that genre and, more broadly, the movement known to modern scholars as the New Music, in the later fifth century BCE.¹ His work is entirely lost to us with the exception of two epithets (PMG 775–776), and a report by Philodemos that he treated the myth of Asklepios’ incineration by Zeus for having raised Hippolytos from the dead (at the request of Artemis, PMG 774). The direct tradition for Kinesias is therefore more tenuous than for almost any other poet of this period.

Nevertheless, Kinesias remains a rather prominent figure of Greek literary history thanks to a rich collection of anecdotal evidence. Of several satirical critiques by contemporary comic poets, best known is Aristophanes’ fairly ample and lighthearted parody in the *Birds* (414 BC); three other mentions or allusions include two verses of *Frogs* (405 BC) that are rather harsher—for reasons I shall explore here—as well as a fragment of the lost *Gerytades* (fr. 156), a play that featured Kinesias prominently. We also have relevant fragments of lost comedies by Pherekrates, Plato Comicus, and Strattis—the last of whom devoted an entire play to lampooning the poet (fr. 14–22). The comic evidence is very rich, as we shall see; but naturally we must expect it to present a distorted picture. Fortunately Kinesias can be approached from several other directions. Two early-fourth century inscriptions provide a welcome real-world corrective—precious, non-prejudicial glimpses of the poet’s genuine popularity and involvement in public life. Another vital source is a fragmentary speech by Lysias, in which the orator defended a client against some charge for illegal activity (παρανομία) that was brought by Kinesias. While this speech is openly hostile, it provides several details, not otherwise attested, that make a crucial contribution to our reconstruction. Plato’s brief discussion in the *Gorgias* contains some predictable remarks on poets who pander to their audiences’ pleasure, and minor biographical detail. The Aristophanic scholia preserve many interesting notices; among the usual conjecture is an occasional gem. Finally, scattered details are to be found in later authors, with an extended discussion by Athenaios our richest single source (for his quotation of lost works).

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¹ For the New Music generally, see *inter al.* Richter 1968; Wilson 1999; Csapo 1999–2000; Wilson 2003b; Csapo 2004; Part IV of Power 2010; Franklin 2013; LeVen 2014.

From these sources we can assign Kinesias an approximate date range of 450–390, and draw a number of inferences about the qualities of his work and its reception in contemporary Athens. Thanks to a flood of recent scholarship on the dithyramb—culminating in the Oxford volume *Dithyramb in Context*²—we are finally in a position to transcend the uniformly negative picture presented by Aristophanes and his colleagues. The present paper is a kind of progress report on research towards a volume dedicated to Kinesias that is to appear in the series *Dithyrambographi Graeci* (ed. A. Gostoli). I shall survey all major information we possess relating to Kinesias’ career in the musical contests of Athens, paying special attention to the ‘sophistic’ qualities of the New Musical dithyramb, and what is surely the most startling of all our notices: the allegation that Kinesias “shat upon the EKATAIA”—the reference is not immediately clear—“while singing in the circular choruses” (Ar. *Ran.* 366 and Σ).

Kinesias and the New Music

The famous parody in Aristophanes’ *Birds* brings together most of the elements that recur in the biographical tradition. Kinesias is the second of six obnoxious visitors hoping to profit from Peisetairos’ foundation of Nephelokokkygia. This context is especially appropriate since the dithyramb had a long history of use in civic rituals connected with the establishment, reconstitution, and renewal of socio-political order, as has been well demonstrated, in connection with dithyrambic fragments of Pindar relating to Thebes, Argos, and Corinth, in a series of studies by Salvatore Lavecchia, Peter Wilson, Barbara Kowalzig, and Lucia Prauscello.³ The scene is also interesting for putting Kinesias into the position of seeking work in a foreign city, as he was otherwise conspicuous in Athens for working alongside a largely imported ‘workforce’.⁴ Possibly this social reality explains allegations that Kinesias was a ξένος or a Theban—foreign birth being a common slur directed at Athenians, for various reasons, by the comic playwrights.⁵

Kinesias’ song has been well analyzed as to its metrical structure and its dithyrambic diction; it is a quite accurate pastiche of the New Musical style, though Aristophanes has doubtless exaggerated for comic effect.⁶ The passage begins as follows (1372–1374):

Κι. ἀναπέτομαι δὴ πρὸς Ὀλυμπον πτερύγεσσι κούφαις (= Anac. 378
PMG).
πέτομαι δ’ ὁδὸν ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλαν μελέων—
Πε. τουτὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα φορτίου δεῖται πτερῶν.

² Kowalzig – Wilson 2013a.

³ Lavecchia 2000, 11–13 et passim, cf. Wilson 2002; Wilson 2003a; Kowalzig 2007, 168–170, 385, et pass.; Introduction to, and papers by Lavecchia, Kowalzig, and Prauscello, in Kowalzig – Wilson 2013a

⁴ For the dominance of non-Athenian professional musicians in Athens, Wilson 1999; Wilson 2000, 66–67.

⁵ Σ Ar. *Ran.* 153; *Sud.* s.v. Λεώκριτος, Πυρρίχη. But Θηβαῖος may well just be a corruption of Ἀθηναῖος.

⁶ Zimmermann 1992, 118–121; Dunbar 1998, 660–673; Ford 2013, 318–320 et passim; LeVen 2014, 74, 153–155.

Kinesias: “I fly indeed up towards Olympos on delicate wings”,
 And I fly now on this, now on that melodic road—
 Peisetairos: *This* business needs a *sack* of wings.

The opening line—a recontextualized quotation of Anakreon—might seem to discourage us from expecting much authentic Kinesian flavor here. But even this can be understood in light of the dithyramb’s propensity for reworking traditional materials, and it is not unlikely that Aristophanes’ other pseudo-Kinesian verses were meant to evoke that poet’s style.⁷ Kinesias’ next line is obviously connected with the ancient metaphor of the “path of song”. What has not been noticed, I believe, is how the distributive expression ὁδὸν ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλαν makes this a professional declaration of adherence to the modulatory style of the New Music, which was accommodated at this time by introducing the supplementary idea of road-junctures; this is shown, for example, by a well-known fragment of Ion of Chios; the term καμπή (‘bend’) that was much-used by and of the New Musicians;⁸ and the technical usage of Aristoxenos.⁹ For Kinesias’ own practice we have the contemporary evidence of Pherekrates—a well-worn passage in which a personified Mousike gives a precious history of fifth-century lyric while complaining of the successive assaults on her chastity by the New Musicians.¹⁰ So we may well imagine the Aristophanic Kinesias running up and down the stage, flapping his arms, with the aulos-player continually modulating as Kinesias sings “here a road, there a road, everywhere a road”.

Kinesias’ Physique as a Reflection of his Music

The Aristophanic parody continues (1375–1377):

Κι.	ἀφόβῳ φρενὶ σώματί τε νέαν ἐφέπων—
Πε.	ἀσπαζόμεσθα φιλύρινον Κινησίαν. τί δεῦρο πόδα σὺ κυλλὸν ἀνὰ κύκλον κυκλεῖς;

⁷ See the metrical analysis and interpretive suggestions of Dunbar 1998, 661–664.

⁸ See with further references Restani 1983, 156–166; Franklin 2013, 226–231.

⁹ Ion of Chios, fr. 32 West: ἐνδεκάχορδε λύρα, δεκαβάμονα τάξιν ἔχουσα / τὰς συμφωνούσας ἁρμονίας τριόδους· / πρὶν μὲν σ’ ἐπτάτονον ψάλλον διὰ τέσσαρα πάντες / Ἑλλήνες, σπανίαν μοῦσαν ἀειράμενοι. (‘Eleven-stringed lyre with a ten-stepped arrangement— / The three-way, consonant crossroads of *harmonía*. / Hitherto all the Greeks played you heptatonic—two tetrachords— / Summoning up a sparse Muse.’) See further West 1992, 25–26, adducing Aristoxenus on Eratocles (*Harm.* 5, cf. 67); cf. Franklin 2002, 687–688, 693–694, with Ar. *Nub.* 964–972. For the Ion fragment more generally, see now Power 2007.

¹⁰ Pherec. 155.8–13: Κινησίας δέ μ’ ὁ κατάρατος Ἀττικός, / ἐξαρμονίους καμπὰς ποιῶν ἐν ταῖς στροφαῖς, / ἀπολώλεχ’ οὕτως, ὥστε τῆς ποιήσεως / τῶν διθυράμβων, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς ἀσπίσιν, / ἀριστερ’ αὐτοῦ φαίνεται τὰ δεξιὰ. (“Kinesias, that cursed Athenian, / making exharmonic bends within his strophes, / has so destroyed me that in the making / of his dithyrambs—just as in shields/his shields—his rights appear to be his lefts”). For detailed consideration of the larger fragment, including the various musical terms and puns, see *inter al.* Düring 1945; Pianko 1963; Borthwick 1968b; Restani 1983; Barker 1984–1989, 1.93–97, 236–238; Zimmermann 1992, 122–123; Zimmermann 1993; Dobrov – Urios-Aparisi 1995.

Kinesias: Following a new path with fearless mind and body—
 Peisetairos: We greet you, lime-wood Kinesias.
 Why do you come here circling your lame foot round the circle?

The language is complex. The primary reference of τί δεῦρο πόδα σὺ κυλλὸν ἀνὰ κύκλον κυκλεῖς;—with the punning language of κυλλὸν (‘lame’) and κύκλον (‘circle’)—is probably the halting, modernist dance of a circular dithyrambic chorus.¹¹ But the pleonastic ἀνὰ κύκλον κυκλεῖς equally combines with the earlier reference to multiple melodic paths (πέτομαι δ’ ὁδὸν ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλαν μελέων) in a technical allusion to some cyclical conception of tonality and modulation.¹² Kinesias’ next line, ἀφόβῳ φρενὶ σώματι τε νέαν ἐφέπων (“following a new path with fearless mind and body”), and Peisetairos’ response, continue to fuse satire of the poet’s physique and stylistic criticism. The curious epithet φιλύρινος, derived from φιλύρα—the silver lime tree (*Tilia platyphyllos*)—was already puzzling to ancient scholars, who variously connected it with limewood’s “pale yellow color” (χλωρός, Kallistratos) or “soft light texture” (κοῦφος, Euphronios, doubtless with reference to κούφαις in 1372¹³). Modern scholars have followed suit, seeing “a reference to lime bass or bast, the thin fibrous inner bark used by the ancients for various purposes . . . and characterized by Pliny as *tenuis*”.¹⁴ But I believe that the correct explanation has been unwittingly preserved by Athenaios, according to whom Aristophanes and “others” alleged that Kinesias wore a limewood board or plank to keep himself from bending (ἵνα μὴ κάμπηται).¹⁵ Dunbar was prepared to take this assertion at face value (“not in itself impossible”).¹⁶ But to my mind the image has a distinctly Aristophanic and comic flavor, given κάμπειν a contemporary professional term for modulation or ‘bending’ a melody,¹⁷ and Kinesias’ notorious excess in applying the technique (Pherekrates). The joke would be that Kinesias’ modulations were so habitual as to seem an involuntary reflex. This reading is perfectly compatible with these comic puns implying New Musicians’ lack of moral ‘uprightness’.¹⁸ Much the same joke, but interestingly inverted, appears in the *Thesmophoriazousae* when Agathon—regularly satirized as an effeminate weakling—is

¹¹ Dunbar 1998, *ad loc.*

¹² Franklin 2002, 696–697.

¹³ Cf. Plato’s description of poets as ‘delicate, winged, holy things’ (κοῦφον χρῆμα ποιητής ἐστι καὶ πτηνὸν καὶ ἱερόν, *Ion* 534b).

¹⁴ Dunbar 1998, *ad loc.*; cf. Lawler 1950, 80–82.

¹⁵ Ath. 12 551a–552b ἦν δ’ ὄντως λεπτότατος καὶ μακρότατος ὁ Κινησιᾶς, εἰς ὃν καὶ ὅλον δράμα γέγραπεν Στράτις, Φθιώτην Ἀχιλλέα αὐτὸν καλῶν διὰ τὸ ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ ποιήσει συνεχῶς τὸ Φθιώτα λέγειν· παίζων οὖν εἰς τὴν ιδέαν αὐτοῦ ἔφη ‘Φθιώτ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ’ ἄλλοι δ’ αὐτόν, ὡς καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης [*Av.* 1377], πολλάκις εἰρήκασι φιλύρινον Κινησιᾶν διὰ τὸ φιλύρας [τοῦ ξύλου] λαμβάνοντα σανίδα συμπεριζώννυσθαι, ἵνα μὴ κάμπηται διὰ τε τὸ μῆκος καὶ τὴν ἰσχνότητα (“Kinesias was actually very thin and tall—Kinesias against whom Strattis even composed a whole comedy [fr. 14–22], calling him ‘Phthian Achilles’ (fr. 17, PMG 775) on account of his continually saying “Phthian” in his poetry; and so joking about his appearance [Strattis] said ‘Phthian Achilles’ . . . But others, including Aristophanes, often called him lime-wood Kinesias on account of his taking a plank of lime-wood and girdling himself so that he not bend because of his height and skinniness”).

¹⁶ Dunbar 1998, *ad loc.*

¹⁷ See n. 8.

¹⁸ Worman 2014, 216; Worman 2015, 24 and n. 66, 129.

said to be *incapable* of bending his strophes back around because of the winter temperatures.¹⁹ It would follow that φιλόρινον Κινησίαν is a compressed allusion to a more expansive comic scene before 414 BC (cf. Athenaios' reference to 'others'). We need not doubt, of course, that Kinesias was in fact tall and skinny, for the joke clearly hinges upon this. A decade later in *Frogs* Aristophanes presented the surreal image of using Kinesias as a set of wings to allow (a probably much heavier) Kleokritos to fly.²⁰ We find further evidence for his physique in Plato Comicus, who mocked Kinesias' skeletal figure (fr. 200); and it earned him a place in Aristophanes' lost *Gerytades* (fr. 156) as one of several corpse-like poets chosen for a mission to Hades. But these further jokes, we shall see, should be explained not solely through Kinesias' physique, but equally his professional dithyrambic interest in celestial and subterrestrial matters.

Ascents and Descents in the Sophistic Dithyramb

The parody in *Birds* continues with Kinesias explaining to Peisetairos that he has come to Nephelokokkygia to acquire a set of wings, and so fly to the Clouds and receive from them “brand new, air-whirled, snow-struck ἀναβολαί”. His diction is appropriately florid (1378–1387)

Κι.	ὄρνις γενέσθαι βούλομαι, λιγύφθογγος ἀηδών—
Πε.	παῦσαι μελωδῶν, ἀλλ' ὅ τι λέγεις εἰπέ μοι.
Κι.	ὑπὸ σοῦ πτερωθεὶς βούλομαι μετάρσιος ἀναπτόμενος ἐκ τῶν νεφελῶν καινὰς λαβεῖν ἀεροδονήτους καὶ νιφοβόλους ἀναβολάς.
Πε.	ἐκ τῶν νεφελῶν γὰρ ἂν τις ἀναβολὰς λάβοι;
Κι.	κρέμαται μὲν οὖν ἐντεῦθεν ἡμῶν ἡ τέχνη. τῶν διθυράμβων γὰρ τὰ λαμπρὰ γίγνεται ἀέρια καὶ σκότι' ἄττα καὶ κυαναυγέα καὶ πτεροδόνητα· σὺ δὲ κλυὼν εἴσει τάχα.

Kinesias:	I wish to become a bird, a clear-voiced swallow—
Peisetairos:	Stop singing, and tell me what you're talking about.
Kinesias:	Winged by you I wish to fly up on high and take from the clouds brand new preludes, air-whirled and snow-struck;
Peisetairos:	Someone could take preludes from the <i>clouds</i> ?
Kinesias:	Yes, our art is rather hung up on them. For in dithyrambs the brilliant bits become things airy and shadowy and dark-rayed and wing-whirled; but soon you will know by hearing.

¹⁹ Ar. *Thesm.* 55–69. The image gets its point from the astrophic ἀναβολαί that were characteristic of the New Dithyramb, since, as we are told by an Aristophanic scholion, καμπαί had a further technical application to strophes, antistrophes, and epodes (Σ Ar. *Nub.* 332). See further Franklin 2013, esp. 226–230.

²⁰ Ar. *Ran.* 1437 εἴ τις πτερώσας Κλεόκριτον Κινησίαν with Σ ὡς λεπτός σφόδρα ὢν κωμωδεῖται; Sud. s.v. Λεώκριτος.

The idea that dithyrambic poets drew inspiration from the Clouds echoes a passage in the homonymous comedy, staged nine years earlier in 423 BC.²¹ Here Sokrates states that the Clouds nourish many kinds of “sophists”, among whom he includes the “song-benders of circular choruses”. A scholiast tells us that ὁσματοκάμπτας refers to the likes of Kinesias, Philoxenos, and Kleomenes—the contemporary dithyrambopoioi.²² Strepsiades goes on to parody a number of dithyrambic expressions (note the Doric genitives) relating to meteorological phenomena, including one that is attributed by the scholiast to Philoxenos (PMG 830; Fongoni 26). This makes it possible that Strepsiades’ other musical phrases are not entirely parodic clichés but—as a scholiast asserts²³—further quotations (comically altered?) so that some few words of Kinesias may indeed be lurking here as unrecognized fragments. In any case, these phrases show that ἄνδρας μετεωροφένακας, appearing immediately after “Song-Benders of Circular Choruses”, refers not to a separate group of Cloud-inspired σοφισταί but is in apposition to ‘song-benders’—thus “meteorological quacks” is an alternative description of the ‘sophistic dithyrambists’ themselves.²⁴ It is no coincidence that the conception of aerial, nebulous inspiration that Aristophanes imputes to the dithyrambopoioi is reminiscent of contemporary pre-Socratic ideas on the nature of cognition.²⁵ One may also identify various sophistic, meteorological themes and “hyper-rational” language in the New Dithyramb.²⁶ As A. Ford concludes, “the composer of dithyrambs came to exemplify a new and special kind of poet, a joyous, visionary singer, unbound by convention and dwelling in lofty, untrammelled realms of thought . . . conversant with natural philosophy and rhetoric; in their songs they blended the posture of hierophant with that of *poeta doctus*.”²⁷

This interpretation of ἄνδρας μετεωροφένακας is corroborated by a passage in the *Peace*, only two years later (421 BC), in which Trygaios describes his journey to the

²¹ If the material goes back to the first version of the play; if it belongs to the revision, this will bring it down no farther than ca. 418 (for the chronology, Dover 1968, lxxx–xcviii). The passage is Ar. *Nub.* 331–338: (Σο.) οὐ γὰρ μὰ Δί’ οἷσθ’ ὅτι πλείστους αὐται βόσκουσι σοφιστάς, / Θουριομάντις, / ιατροτέχνας, σφραγιδονυχαργοκομήτας, / κυκλίων τε χορῶν ὁσματοκάμπτας, ἄνδρας μετεωροφένακας, / οὐδὲν δρῶντας βόσκουσ’ ἀργούς, ὅτι ταύτας μουσοποιοῦσιν. / (Στ.) ταῦτ’ ἄρ’ ἐποίουν “ὕγρᾱν Νεφελᾶν στρεπταίγλαν δάιον ὀρμάν”, / “πλοκάμους θ’ ἑκατογκεφάλα Τυφῶ”, “πρημαινούσας τε θυέλλας”, / εἶτ’ “ἀερίας διεράς γαμψοὺς οἰωνοὺς ἀερονηχεῖς”, / “ὄμβρους θ’ ὑδάτων δροσερᾶν νεφελᾶν”

²² Σ Ar. *Nub.* 333: κυκλίων τε χορῶν: εἰς τοὺς περὶ Κινησίαν καὶ Φιλόξενον καὶ Κλεομένην ΕΜ. καὶ τούτους εἶναι τῶν σοφιστῶν βούλεται VE. λέγει δὲ τοὺς διθυραμβοποιούς: τῶν γὰρ κυκλίων χορῶν ἦσαν οὗτοι διδάσκαλοι.

²³ Σ 335: πάντα ταῦτα ἔκ τινων ποιητῶν εἰσιν κτλ.

²⁴ Cf. Dover 1968 ad loc. The application of μετεωροσοφισταί at 360 to Sokrates and Prodikos can be balanced by *Sud.* s.v. Διθυραμβοδιδάσκαλοι: περὶ μετεώρων καὶ περὶ τῶν νεφελῶν λέγουσι πολλὰ καὶ συνθέτους δὲ λέξεις ἐποίουν καὶ ἔλεγον ἐνδιαεραιερηνιχέτους: οἷος ἦν Ἴων ὁ Χίος, ὁ ποιητής.

²⁵ See with references Dover 1968, noting especially Anaxagoras and Diogenes of Apollonia; Ford 2013, 326, comparing the ‘meteoric’ cognitive theories of the Aristophanic Kinesias (An. 1387) and Sokrates (*Nub.* 225–230); cf. Ford 2002, 162–165 for the contemporary “poetics of air”.

²⁶ See Ford 2013, 320, 326–327 (“The song for the seasonal god had, as ever, to be created anew, and so it called on poets to exhibit their credentials as wise men . . . new dithyrambic songs were presented not as ecstatic outbursts but as potent appeals to Dionysos that embodied deep understanding”, 318; “hyper-rational”, 326), and below n. 105.

²⁷ Ford 2013, 331.

heavens, during which he encountered “the souls of two or three dithyrambic poets” flitting about looking for ἀναβολαί in the Clouds (829–834):

- Oι. ἄλλον τιν’ εἶδες ἄνδρα κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα
πλανώμενον πλὴν σαυτὸν;
- Τρ. οὐκ, εἰ μὴ γέ που
ψυχὰς δὺ’ ἢ τρεῖς διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων.
- Oι. τί δ’ ἔδρων;
- Τρ. ξυνελέγοντ’ ἀναβολὰς ποτώμεναι
τὰς εὐδιαεριαιρινηγέτους τινάς.
- Oι. οὐκ ἦν ἄρ’ οὐδ’ ἃ λέγουσι, κατὰ τὸν αἰθέρα
ὥς ἀστέρες γιγνόμεθ’, ὅταν τις ἀποθάνῃ;
- Τρ. μάλιστα.
- Oι. καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ἀστὴρ νῦν ἐκεῖ;
- Τρ. Ἴων ὁ Χῖος, ὅσπερ ἐποίησεν πάλαι
ἐνθάδε τὸν Ἀοῖον ποθ’ ὥς δ’ ἦλθ’, εὐθέως
Ἀοῖον αὐτὸν πάντες ἐκάλουν ἀστέρα.
- Slave: Did you see anyone else up in the sky
wandering around besides yourself?
- Trygaios: No—except, I suppose,
two or three souls of dithyrambic poets.
- Slave: What were they doing?
- Trygaios: Flitting around collecting preludes—
some of those floating-in-the-midday-air²⁸ ones.
- Slave: So then wasn’t it true what they say, that
when people die we become stars in the sky?
- Trygaios: Absolutely.
- Slave: And what star is up there now?
- Trygaios: Ion of Chios, the very one who once upon a time
composed his *Morning Star* here; and when he went, right away
everyone was calling him the star Aeios.

Besides confirming our interpretation of the ‘meteorological quacks’ in *Clouds*, these lines of *Peace* provide further important information on the quasi-sophistic and scientific interests of the New Dithyrambists, who are credited here with theories *about the fate of the soul after death*. This Aristophanes passage—an early witness to the idea that fortunate souls went to dwell on the moon or stars²⁹—is vital evidence that the New Dithyrambists, while maintaining their traditional interest in eschatological speculation, were not intellectually static. Although ἃ λέγουσι (“what they say”) in 833 is sometimes interpreted vaguely—that is, not referred directly back to the διθυραμβοδιδάσκαλοι of 831—it is certain that the dithyrambic poets are still in question thanks to the mention of Ion of Chios (ca. 484–422), the one concrete

²⁸ I borrow the translation of this epithet from Ford 2013, 326.

²⁹ Rohde 1907, 345, 359 n. 75–76, 387, 410 n. 116, 516–517 n. 53.

example given of a soul become a star.³⁰ For the polymathic Ion was himself active as a dithyrambic poet,³¹ achieving fame in Athens itself (where he spent much of his life, and died³²); a scholiast goes on to quote the first verses of the song alluded to by Aristophanes, presumably the victorious dithyramb itself.³³ It is probably relevant that Aioios was an ancient name, connected with the dawn, that became attached to Adonis.³⁴ Although Ion competed publically in Athens with his tragedies as early as the 82nd Olympiad (451–448, cf. *πάλαι* in *Pax* 832),³⁵ Aristophanes' grouping of him with the New Dithyrambists accords well with the important fragment, mentioned above, in which Ion celebrates his polychordal lyre and the same melodic road-junctures that were typical of the “Song-Benders” (Ion was still active at Athens in 428³⁶). And Ion's own fragments give evidence of his “pseudo-scientific interest in the night skies”, including a description of the mystic Mousaios as ‘moon-fallen’ or ‘moon-begotten’—either way a rather dithyrambic compound³⁷—and a conception of the moon as “a translucent, glassy body in one way, but lacking light in another”.³⁸

That dithyrambic poets should engage in speculative thinking about the nature of the soul and its fate after death is not so surprising given the deep and persistent link between the Dionysian dithyramb and mystery cult. Recent scholarship has explored the genre's early concern with ideas of transformation, including the transcendence of death through the ritual enactment of catabatic myths.³⁹ (The relatively early—probably late Archaic—citharodic interest in the katabasis of Orpheus is presumably

³⁰ The scholia (Σ *Pax* 835–837a) and *Suda* (s.v. Διθυραμβοδιδάσκαλοι) rightly conclude from this allusion that Ion περιβόητος ἐγένετο.

³¹ Sallust. Argum. ii in Soph. *Antigon.* (PMG 740); Σ Ar. *Pax* 835–837a (v. *infra*); Σ Ap. Rhod. 1.1165 (PMG 741); *Sud.* s.v. Διθυραμβοδιδάσκαλοι (with information on his other literary activities) and Ἐνδιατριανερηνχέτους.

³² See the survey of West 1985.

³³ Σ Ar. *Pax* 835–837a (the verses are also in *Sud.* s.v. Διθυραμβοδιδάσκαλοι): Ἴων ὁ Χῖος· διθυράμβων ποιητὴς καὶ τραγωδίας καὶ μελῶν. ἐποίησε δὲ ᾠδὴν ἧς ἡ ἀρχὴ “ἁοῖον ἀεροφοῖταν / ἀστέρα μείναμεν, ἀελίου / λευκῇ πτέρυγι πρόδρομον (PMG 745)” . . . φασὶ δὲ αὐτὸν ὁμοῦ διθυράμβον καὶ τραγωδίαν ἀγωνισάμενον ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ νικῆσαι, καὶ εὐνοίας χάριν προῖκα χῖον οἶνον πέμψαι Ἀθηναίους (“Ion of Chios: a poet of dithyrambs and tragedy and melic poetry. And he composed a song whose beginning is “Aioios the air-roaming / star we awaited, the sun's / forerunner with white wing”) . . . And they say that he was victorious in Attica competing in the dithyramb and tragedy simultaneously, and for the sake of this favorable recognition he sent Chian wine as a gift for the Athenians.”) West 1985 derives the anecdote about Chian wine (also in *Sud.* s.v. Ἴων Χῖος) from a comic quip.

³⁴ See with references Franklin 2015, 498–503.

³⁵ *Sud.* s.v. Ἴων Χῖος; West 1985, 72.

³⁶ FGrH 392 T 6; West 1985, 73.

³⁷ Cf. *Sud.* s.v. Ἴων Χῖος: συνθέτους λόγους; see further Baltussen 2007, 310 and n. 35..

³⁸ Mousaios as ΣΕΛΗΝΟ[ΓΕΝ]Η or ΣΕΛΗΝΟ[ΠΙΕΤ]Η: Henrichs 1975, 14; West 1983b; Henrichs 1985; cf. Jennings 2007, 342 (quotation) and n. 53, who also notes Aet. *Plac.* 2.25.11 (= FGrH 392 F 26 = Leurini 2000 fr. 117: Περὶ σελήνης οὐσίας . . . Ἴων σῶμα τῇ μὲν ὑελοειδὲς διανγές, τῇ δὲ ἀφεγγές; cf. also Baltussen 2007, 308–310, pointing out that ὑελοειδὲς probably suggested to the ancients ‘shiny’ rather than ‘transparent’; and that διανγές was used of the sun by Philolaos [44A19 D–K]) and Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 658c (= TrGF 19 F 57 = Leurini 2000 fr. 72) on the moon's rays as not ripening grapes. Further evidence of Ion's cosmological (and numerological) interests and ‘sophistry’ comes from his *Triagmos* (36B1–4 D–K, perhaps a.k.a. Κοσμολογικός and Περὶ μετεώρων, cf. A2, 3), for which see recently Baltussen 2007 with earlier literature.

³⁹ Lavecchia 2000, 190–197, 201–212 pass.; Wilson 2003a, 174–180; Lavecchia 2013.

parallel.⁴⁰) I shall return to this point below. First I would emphasize that this range of dithyrambic interests—that is, the meteorological/celestial and catabatic—accords well with Aristophanes’ description of the research program of the Phrontisterion, which includes investigation of both τὰ ἄνω and τὰ κατώ. The close alliance of these two spheres is clearly illustrated by Strepsiades’ first encounter with the students, who “seek after subterrestrial matters” and “grope about in the Erebos-darkness beneath Tartaros”, while simultaneously engaged in ‘posterior analytics’ of the heavens.⁴¹ Given the identity of the play’s chorus, Aristophanes naturally develops meteorological/celestial jokes more fully. But there is a vital reference to katabasis when Strepsiades compares entering the Phrontisterion with the fear one would feel “going down (καταβαίνων) into the cave of Trophonios”.⁴² This allusion contributes to the Phrontisterion’s representation as a kind of mystery cult, with induction now implicitly compared to a catabatic ordeal.⁴³ The idea was well familiar to the Athenians from the Eleusinian mysteries. As to Trophonios, Pausanias tells us that the rituals preliminary to consulting the oracle included drinking from wells of Memory and Forgetfulness—key elements of catabatic journeys in the ‘Orphic’ gold-leaf tablets.⁴⁴ The enquirer was then led into the cave by a priest to guide his underworld experience; the comparable role of ‘necromancer’ or γόης that this implies for Sokrates can be paralleled by the underworld journeys and out-of-body soul-quests not only of Orpheus but such historical yet semi-legendary wisemen as Epimenides of Crete, Pythagoras, and even Empedokles in the fifth century.⁴⁵ Just what a contemporary of Aristophanes might have experienced when consulting Trophonios we cannot say, but basic analogues for what Pausanias tells us must have already been in place.⁴⁶ An interesting array of further possibilities is usefully suggested by Plutarch’s quasi-Platonic myth about Timarkhos—a young associate of Sokrates—who lay in the cave for two days while his soul travelled about the upper heavens with its celestial rotations, examined the detailed geography of the lower realms, and thereby learned about the nature of the cosmos, human existence, and various fates of the soul after death.⁴⁷ Aristophanes reprised this idea of Sokrates as a psychagogic underworld traveller in the *Birds* with a remarkable little song that alludes to Odysseus’ νέκυια.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Martin 2001 with Power 2010, 360–364, cf. 298 n. 303, 304.

⁴¹ Ar. *Nub.* 187–194: (Στ.) ἀτὰρ τί ποτ’ εἰς τὴν γῆν βλέπουσιν οὗτοι; / (Μα.) ζητοῦσιν οὗτοι τὰ κατὰ γῆς / . . . οὗτοι δ’ ἐρεβοδιφῶσιν ὑπὸ τὸν Τάρταρον / (Στ.) τί δῆθ’ ὁ πρωκτὸς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν βλέπει; / (Μα.) αὐτὸς καθ’ αὐτὸν ἀστρονομεῖν διδάσκεται. Erebos is familiar from Homer et al. as the realm of the dead; its position here vis-à-vis Tartaros need not be pressed (see Dover ad loc.).

⁴² Ar. *Nub.* 508–509: ὥς δέδοικ’ ἐγὼ / εἴσω καταβαίνων ὥσπερ ἐς Τροφώνιου.

⁴³ Cf. Dover 1968, xli; Byl 1980; West 1983a, 174–175; Byl 1988; Bowie 1993, 117 and n. 62, 119; Lada-Richards 1999, 58, 70, 72, etc.

⁴⁴ Paus. 9.39.8. Cf. with further references Bernabé – Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008, 20, 56; Edmonds 2004, 106–107.

⁴⁵ Rohde 1907, 378–384, 598–601, etc.; Dieterich 1893, 129–136; Burkert 1972, 103 n. 32, 121–165, etc.; Bowie 1993, 119.

⁴⁶ Burkert 1972, 154 and n. 189.

⁴⁷ Plut. *De genio Socratis* 20–22.

⁴⁸ Ar. *Av.* 1553–1564 with comments of Dunbar 1998; cf. Dover 1968, xxxv.

As Dover observed, “there is nothing in our evidence for the sophists to suggest that they used the language or procedures of initiation”.⁴⁹ I propose therefore that Aristophanes, rather than simply “presenting a metaphor in concrete form”,⁵⁰ has drawn the catabatic motifs with which he characterizes the Phrontisterion from those other *protégés* of the Clouds—the dithyrambopoioi, who had long been professionally interested in mystery cult and underworld journeys. Yet we must not forget that Aristophanes himself links his dithyrambic *contemporaries*—the Song-Benders of Circular Choruses—to the sophists. Lavecchia, Wilson, and others have pointed out the New Musicians’ maintenance of the traditional dithyrambic cultivation of myths dealing with death followed by rebirth or return.⁵¹ Melannipides composed a *Persephone* (PMG 759–766, containing a dithyrambic etymology of Akheron⁵²); Timotheos a *Birthpangs of Semele* (PMG 792), an *Elpenor* (PMG 779)⁵³ and a *Niobe* (PMG 786–787, which featured Kharon)⁵⁴; and Telestes an *Asklepios* (PMG 806). The ‘Arion’ song PMG 939 is also relevant.⁵⁵ So too the fourth-century southern Italian vases of underworld scenes with Orpheus depicted as a contemporary, i.e. New Musical, citharode⁵⁶—his instrument complete with the many strings (πολυχορδία) required by modern song-benders.

As it happens, one of the two myths we know that Kinesias definitely treated—that of Asklepios (PMG 774)—also conforms to this type. Asklepios shares with Semele and (sometimes) Herakles the distinction of being killed by Zeus’ lightning bolt, with destruction followed by various forms of resurrection, heroization or apotheosis. The motif is also found in ‘Orphic’ gold tablets from Thurii, where it is related to the idea that initiates have paid for their earthly sins before entering realm of the blessed.⁵⁷ Now Aristophanes’ allusion to Kinesias in *Clouds* (423/418) and his extended pastiche in *Birds* (414) are distinctly positive by contrast with the brief and damning references we shall see below in *Frogs* (406) and *Ecclesiazusae* (391?); the earlier passages relate only to Kinesias’ poetic style, not to the impiety for which he was later infamous. From this it seems a fair deduction that between ca. 423–416 Kinesias was at the height of his artistic popularity, and had as yet provoked mainly aesthetic controversy. It is therefore tempting to speculate that Kinesias’ *Asklepios* was stimulated by that god’s importation from Epidauros to Athens in 420—perhaps even officially connected with it, given the dithyramb’s traditional use in facilitating innovations in cultic topography.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ Dover 1968, xli.

⁵⁰ Dover 1968, xli, citing Pl. *Euthyd.* 277d and *Symp.* 209e; but in the *Symposium*, at least, Plato’s use of the initiation “metaphor” may be a somewhat more pregnant allusion to the cultural/intellectual interests of Agathon et al. in 416: see further below.

⁵¹ Wilson 2003a, 170; Kowalzig – Wilson 2013b, 21.

⁵² See n. 105.

⁵³ For Elpenor in an Orphic context, Bernabé – Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008, 30.

⁵⁴ Cf. Power 2013, 245, 250.

⁵⁵ Analyzed by Ieranò 2013.

⁵⁶ See with references Power 2010, 364.

⁵⁷ A1–A3, Timpone Piccolo: see discussion of Edmonds 2004, 73–75.

⁵⁸ See above, n. 3. The influence of Asklepios had probably grown during the Great Plague, the Peace of Nikias (421) now allowing the relationship to be formalized (Dodds 1951, 193)—a gesture further motivated by Athenian strategic interests in the Peloponnese (Wickkiser 2008, 62–105,

The evidence discussed here for dithyramb's traditional and ongoing interest in catabatic themes and mystery cult provides, I shall argue below, vital context for interpreting further activity of Kinesias himself, along with what I believe to be the most illuminating parallel—Diagoras of Melos.

Kinesias' Claim to Fame

Returning to *Birds*, Aristophanes allows 'Kinesias' to develop a number of verses that are perhaps the closest thing we have to actual fragments (1392–1394, 1395b–1396, 1398–1401). Obviously we must allow for comic exaggeration. Still, from the earlier song of the nightingale, and further lyric pastiches in other plays, Aristophanes clearly enjoyed trying his hand at different styles.⁵⁹ In any case, after Peisetairos continues to abuse Kinesias, the poet exclaims, “You dare you do treat me this way—I, the dithyrambist who am always fought over by the tribes?!” (ταυτὶ πεποίηκας τὸν κυκλιοδιδάσκαλον, / ὃς ταῖσι φυλαῖς περιμάχητός εἰμ' ἀεὶ; 1403–1404). At first glance, one might seek the humour in an empty boast, since the association of poets and tribes was governed by a lottery system. But P. Wilson has attractively suggested, on the basis of this line, that the lottery's purpose was rather to establish the order in which χορηγοί would then choose from the list of poets in the running that year; and so they might very well negotiate and haggle over who got whom.⁶⁰ The joke would then be considerably amplified if Kinesias had recently been everyone's last choice. However, G. Ieranò has now made a compelling case for taking Kinesias' words at face value.⁶¹ And after all, the victims of comic literary criticism were not limited to those without talent, but included—indeed featured—those whose celebrity and/or notoriety made them professional rivals in other genres.⁶² Agathon and especially Euripides are prominent examples in Aristophanes.

Kinesias' ongoing popularity, despite the scandal to be discussed, is attested by a choregic inscription from the early fourth-century—twenty years after *Birds*.⁶³ A second inscription, dated by archon and prytany to early 393, is still more impressive.⁶⁴ Here we learn that Kinesias proposed a successful motion to pay some

discounting the traditional involvement of Sophokles, 66–67). Eleusinian cultic agents were closely involved, greeting the god at the Piraeus and escorting him to temporary quarters in the city Eleusinion during the Greater Mysteries; he was later settled into place next to Dionysos Eleutheros on the south side of the Acropolis (IG II2 4960/4961, SEG 25.226: Wickkiser 2008, 62–76). The god's festivals at Athens were thereafter coordinated with the cults of both Eleusinian Demeter and Dionysos Eleuthereus, including an Asklepieia on the first day of the City Dionysia—with the dithyrambic contests on the following day (Wickkiser 2008, 77–89).⁵⁸ Some connection between the healing god and ideas of dramatic catharsis seems not unlikely (Wickkiser 2008, 82–84, cautious); note that a number of theaters were later built in Asklepios-sanctuaries (Sear 2006, 45). Here the mimetic dithyramb might be as relevant as tragedy itself.

⁵⁹ See generally Silk 1980.

⁶⁰ Wilson 2000, 67–68.

⁶¹ Ieranò 2013.

⁶² Cf. Kowalzig – Wilson 2013b, 20 on comic venom having more to do with poetic rivalry than “musical ethics”.

⁶³ IG II² 3028: — ατος Φαληρεὺς ἐχ[ορήγε — — —]— — — Κινησίας ἐδίδ[ασκε].

⁶⁴ IG II² 18: ἐπ' Εὐβολίδο ἄρχοντος ἐπὶ τῆς Π[ανδίου]-νίδος ἔκτης πρυτανευόσης vacat ἡ Πλάτων Νικοχάρως Φλυεὺς ἐγρα[μμάτευε]. ἔδοξεν τῇ βολῇ· Κινησίας εἶπε· π[ερὶ ὧν Ἀν]δροσθένης λέγει

form of official compliment to Dionysios I, tyrant of Syracuse. That this Kinesias is precisely the dithyrambic poet is a ready conclusion from the inscription's location in the Temple of Dionysos, and the Syracusan tyrant's known patronage of Philoxenos (and perhaps other New Musicians), along with his own poetic pretensions.⁶⁵ Kinesias was thus moving in rather exalted social circles, a fact that suggests he was still prominent as an artist.⁶⁶

Still we must not overlook the evidence of Lysias, from one of apparently two speeches that he delivered against Kinesias.⁶⁷ Of these, one is partially preserved by Athenaios in paraphrase and direct quotation. The orator was defending a certain Phantias from a charge of παρανομία brought by Kinesias. To discredit his opponent, Lysias reminds the jury that Kinesias at some point abandoned his poetic art to become rich as a συκοφάντης.⁶⁸ Of course the orator may have distorted the picture for rhetorical effect; but even if it is right that Kinesias left off composing at some point, this would not prevent him from being active in cultural affairs, such as one reasonably infers from the inscription about Dionysios. Ieranò has plausibly connected Lysias' attitude to Kinesias here with the orator's hostility to Dionysios, against whom he delivered a powerful oration in the *Olympiakos*, delivered in 388.⁶⁹ But the term συκοφάντης suggests some form of obnoxious activity within Athens itself, whatever else may be implied. We shall return below to another important indication of Kinesias' involvement in political life.

Kinesias and Contemporary Kakodaimonism

Athenaios goes on to give a lengthy quotation from Lysias' speech.⁷⁰ The orator emphasizes how ironic it is that Kinesias, of all people, should pose as a defender of

ἐπαινέσαι Δι[ο]ν[ύσιον τὸ]ν Σικελίας ἄρχ[ο]ντ[α] καὶ Λεπτίνην τὸν ἀδελφ[ὸν] τὸν Διον[ύ]σιον καὶ Θεαρίδην τὸν ἀδελφ[ὸν] τὸν Διονυσ[ί]ον καὶ Πολύξενον τὸν κηδεστῆ[ν] τὸν Διονυσίον — — — — —
— — — — —].

⁶⁵ See Philoxenos PMG 816; Diod. Sic. 15.6; Ath. 6e–f; Power 2013, 253; LeVen 2014, 16–18, 127–132, 144–148 *et passim*.

⁶⁶ Cf. Kowalzig – Wilson 2013b, 24 n. 94.

⁶⁷ Cf. Harp. Gramm. s.v. Κινησίας: Λυσίου β' λόγοι εἰσι πρὸς Κινησίαν κτλ.

⁶⁸ Ath. 12 551a–552b: ὅτι δὲ ἦν ὁ Κινησίας νοσώδης καὶ δεινὸς τᾶλλα Λυσίας ὁ ρήτωρ ἐν τῷ ὑπὲρ Φανίου παρανόμων ἐπιγραφόμενῳ λόγῳ εἶρηκεν, φάσκων αὐτὸν ἀφόμενον τῆς τέχνης συκοφαντεῖν καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτου πλουτεῖν (“Lysias the orator, in the speech entitled *In Defense of Phantias on a Charge of Lawlessness*, has said that Kinesias was sickly (unwholesome?) and strange in other respects, asserting that he (Kinesias), giving up his art, turned informer and thereby grew rich”).

⁶⁹ Ieranò 2013, 380.

⁷⁰ Ath. 12 551d = Lys. fr. 53 Thalheim (p350.22ff.): Θαυμάζω δὲ εἰ μὴ βαρέως φέρετε ὅτι Κινησίας ἐστὶν ὁ τοῖς νόμοις βοηθός, ὃν ὑμεῖς πάντες ἐπίστασθε ἀσεβέστατον ἀπάντων καὶ παρανομώτατον ἀνθρώπων γεγονέναι. Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοιαῦτα περὶ θεοῦ ἐξαμαρτάνων, ἃ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ καὶ λέγειν, τῶν κωμωδοδιδασκάλων <δ> ἀκούετε καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτόν; οὐ μετὰ τοῦτου ποτὲ Ἀπολλοφάνης καὶ Μυσταλίδης καὶ Λυσίθεος συνεισιτῶντο, μίαν ἡμέραν ταξάμενοι τῶν ἀποφράδων, ἀντὶ δὲ νομηνιαστῶν κακοδαμονιστὰς σφίσιν αὐτοῖς τοῦνομα θέμενοι, πρέπον μὲν ταῖς αὐτῶν τύχαις, οὐ μὴν ὥς τοῦτο διαπραττόμενοι τὴν διάνοιαν ἔσχον, ἀλλ' ὥς καταγελῶντες τῶν θεῶν καὶ τῶν νόμων τῶν ἡμετέρων κτλ. (“But I am amazed if you are not angered that Kinesias is the ‘defender of the laws’, Kinesias who you all know has been the most irreligious and lawless of all men. Is this not the man who has committed such sins against the gods as others would find shameful even to say, and which you hear about from the comic poets every year? Did not Apollophanes and Mystalides and Lysitheos used

the law—Kinesias “who you all know has been the most unholy and lawless of all mankind. Was it not he who committed offenses against the gods—offenses of the sort which, for other men, are a matter of shame even to *say* (αἰσχρὸν καὶ λέγειν)—offenses that you hear about year after year from the comic poets?” That Lysias could appeal to the jurors in these terms shows that, while Kinesias may indeed have been successful and popular at some stages (n.b.) of his career, the negative view implied by Aristophanes and his colleagues—especially in the later Aristophanic references (*Frogs*, *Ecclesiazusae*)—is not entirely comic fiction. Kinesias was genuinely controversial in some way.

Lysias goes on to mention a sort of dinner club or sympotic ἐταιρεία founded by Kinesias and two like-minded characters, the purpose of which, he claims, was “to mock our gods and laws”. They called themselves, provocatively, the Κακοδαιμονισταί—roughly the ‘Cursed Wretches’.⁷¹ Lysias pairs this name, by way of contrast, with Νουμηνιασταί, a typical designation of clubs who followed the custom of meeting upon the new-moon day;⁷² by contrast Kinesias’ group “dined together, choosing one of the forbidden days” (συνεισιτῶντο, μίαν ἡμέραν ταξάμενοι τῶν ἀποφράδων). But Κακοδαιμονισταί equally mirrors Ἀγαθοδαιμονισταί (‘Good Fortune Club’), a respectable name used by clubs of abstemious habits.⁷³ No doubt Kinesias and his friends drank freely, “making a point of dining on unlucky days” to “exhibit [their] scorn of superstition by deliberately tempting the god [and] doing as many unlucky things as possible”.⁷⁴

To modern ears the Kakodaimonists may sound like a high-spirited group of young aristocratic intellectuals, and quite probably they saw themselves in just this light.⁷⁵ Nor were they alone; from Demosthenes’ speech against Konon we learn of other rowdy aristocratic clubs called Ithyphalloi and Autolekythoi that engaged in priapic sexual initiations and, like Kinesias, did things that were shameful for reasonable people even to mention.⁷⁶ Konon himself had belonged to a group called the Triballoi (54.39)—self-styled barbarians who, among other stunts, used to steal and eat the so-called ‘dinners of Hekate’ (Ἑκαταῖα). These were offerings to the goddess of an apotropaic and cathartic nature, which the affluent would set out at shrines or statues of Hekate (Ἑκάταια/Ἑκαταῖα⁷⁷)—commonly located at crossroads and/or before houses⁷⁸—on the thirtieth of the month.⁷⁹ Since these ‘dinners’, predictably, were

to dine with him, choosing one of the forbidden days, and giving themselves the name of the “Cursed Wretches”, rather than “New Mooners”—this being appropriate to their fortunes—not indeed that they came up with the idea in order to bring this [sc. bad fortune] about, but to mock our gods and laws”).

⁷¹ Cf. Pherec. 155.8: Κινησίας ὁ κατάρατος.

⁷² For which, Poland 1909, 64.

⁷³ Calhoun 1913, 32–33 (noting Hesych. s.v. Ἀγαθοδαιμονισταί· οἱ ὀλιγοποτοῦντες); Dodds 1951, 188; Woodbury 1965, 210.

⁷⁴ Dodds 1951, 188.

⁷⁵ Murray 1990, 158–160.

⁷⁶ Demosth. 54.14, 16–17: οὗτοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ τελοῦντες ἀλλήλους τῷ ἰθυφάλλῳ, καὶ τοιαῦτα ποιοῦντες ἃ πολλὴν αἰσχύνην ἔχει καὶ λέγειν, μὴ τί γε δὴ ποιεῖν ἀνθρώπους μετρίου (17). For this passage, see Borthwick 1993

⁷⁷ Both accentuations are found: see Dover 1993, ad 366; cf. LSJ s.v. Ἑκαταῖος.

⁷⁸ Ar. *Vesp.* 804 (ὥσπερ Ἑκάταιον, πανταχοῦ πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν) guarantees regular placement before houses/doors/gates, whence Hekate’s epithet Προπυλαία, Hesych. s.v., cf. s.v. ἐκάταια· τὰ πρὸ τῶν

typically consumed by the destitute,⁸⁰ the Triballoi's 'sacrilege' consisted not only in undermining the apotropaic benefits of the δεῖπνα, but equally in the refusal of charity and *noblesse oblige*.

Such groups' "desire to live dangerously" and their "contempt for religious conventions . . . engendered by rationalism"⁸¹ is the best context, I think, for an anecdote about Kinesias told twice by Plutarch—once, appropriately, in his essay on "How young people should listen to poets". During a performance in Athens of Timotheos' *Artemis*, after the goddess was described as "mantic, frantic, Bacchic, fanatic" (θυιάδα φοιβάδα μαινάδα λυσσάδα),⁸² Kinesias leapt up from the audience and shouted "May *you* have a daughter like that!"⁸³ This tale is one of several that exemplify "New Music's internecine criticism . . . performed paratextually, in the form of epideictic quips delivered offstage"; while their historicity is often questioned, they are held at least to encapsulate aspects of contemporary critical discourse and intergeneric professional rivalry. On this view, criticism of kitharoidia is made the more effective by having Kinesias, of all people, "vent his moral outrage; next to Timotheos" he is "a bulwark of decency and 'family values'".⁸⁴ (Other such scenes are discussed by M. Ercoles in this volume.) But to my mind the anecdote is just as effectively connected with three qualities that Kinesias no doubt possessed: an irrepressible wit, a sharp sense of dramatic timing, and a taste for flirting with public outrage. I confess that I find the story perfectly believable, given Kinesias' kakodaimonism. But not everyone would have been so easily amused: interrupting an essentially cultic event—a musical offering to the goddess—would have been seen by many as sacrilegious.⁸⁵ By contrast such behavior would have been tolerated and indeed expected at a comic competition, with its rowdy public.⁸⁶ Interestingly, of the other three Kakodaimonists whom Lysias names, one—Apollonophanes—was perhaps the comic poet of this name.⁸⁷ In any case Kinesias' outburst may be joined with other evidence for the adoption of comic modes by contemporary poets of the dithyramb and citharodic nomos (see further below).

θυρῶν Ἑκάτης ἀγάλματα. τινὲς δὲ τὰ ἐν τριόδοις; Farnell 1896–1909, 2.509 and 601 §23b; Kraus 1960, 13, 39, 68, etc. (for archaeological remains, 97–128 with Taf. 3–24).

⁷⁹ For the custom, see Meuli 1946, 200–201; Borthwick 1966, 333–336.

⁸⁰ For the Hekate-dinners, see esp. Ar. *Plut.* 594–597 with scholia; Lucian *Dial. Mort.* 1; Farnell 1896–1909, 2.511 and 600 §13b; Kraus 1960, 91. For the sacral, apotropaic character of such offerings, implicit in their synchronization with the lunar cycle, cf. *Plut. Mor.* 280c, 290d.

⁸¹ Murray 1990, 159.

⁸² Trans. Campbell.

⁸³ *Plut. De superst.* 10 (170A–B): Τοῦ Τιμοθέου τὴν Ἄρτεμιν ἄδοντος ἐν Ἀθήναις καὶ λέγοντος "θυιάδα φοιβάδα μαινάδα λυσσάδα" (PMG 778) Κινησίας ὁ μελοποιὸς ἐκ τῶν θεατῶν ἀναστὰς, "τοιαύτη σοι," εἶπε, "θυγάτηρ γένοιτο"; cf. *De aud. poet.* 4.

⁸⁴ Power 2010, 214, 508; Power 2013, 248–249 (quotation); cf. LeVen 2014, 191.

⁸⁵ Kinesias' ἀσέβεια is often emphasized: [Lys.] 6.17 (*In Andocidem*); fr. 53 (= Ath. 12 551d); Harp. Gramm. s.v. Κινησίας.

⁸⁶ Cf. Aristophanes' insults to audience members (*Nub.* 1100–1105, *Ran.* 276, etc.), and Sokrates' standing up while *Clouds* was in progress so that foreigners might see who the play's target was (Ael. *VH* 2.13). Such exchanges are given literary form by the intertextual dialogues between Aristophanes, Kratinos, and their contemporaries: see inter al. Hubbard 1991; Bakola 2010; Biles 2011.

⁸⁷ Calhoun 1913, 32.

Normally, no doubt, provocative club antics provoked only shaking heads and wagging fingers, to be brought up by a Lysias or Demosthenes if circumstances went from bad to worse. But public tolerance had its limits, as shown by the famous events of 415 when at least five separate sympotic *ἐταιρεῖαι* were prosecuted for profaning the Eleusinian mysteries by performing them privately, without official cult personnel, and in the presence of non-initiates.⁸⁸ Whether or not these transgressions had some sinister political motivation, as was feared, remains unclear. Nor do all scholars agree that the private mysteries were parodic,⁸⁹ though it is interesting to find as many as three comic poets among the accused.⁹⁰ The scandal must be equally seen as a manifestation of the contemporary sophistic environment and its intellectual emancipation from traditional religious authority. It is surely significant that Plato set his *Symposium* in 416 BC at the house of Agathon, a New Musician; that the dialogue's philosophical centerpiece is presented as a kind of initiatory myth;⁹¹ and that it closes with Sokrates convincing Agathon and Aristophanes that one and the same playwright could compose both tragedy and comedy (223c–d). The dialogue presents a discreet and highly stylized literary representation, molded to suit Plato's own ends, of the social-intellectual scene within which the scandal transpired; it is no coincidence that Alkibiades puts in an appearance—after the main event, and arriving from some more reckless symposium of his own.

I suggest that the contemporary dithyrambists to whom Aristophanes alludes in both *Clouds* and *Peace* were flirting with the same kind of intellectual renovations. But since they operated in the public, cultic sphere, the potential for causing offense was correspondingly greater, notwithstanding that the dithyramb was itself traditionally viewed as an appropriate medium for innovation.⁹² I believe this situation best accounts for the famous 'atheism' of Diagoras of Melos, against whom Athens issued a "wanted, dead or alive" decree ca. 417–415 "on account of his impiety since he explained the mysteries to everyone, making them common knowledge and trivializing them, causing would-be initiates to turn away" (διὰ τὸ ἀσεβὲς αὐτοῦ, ἐπεὶ τὰ μυστήρια πᾶσι διηγείτο κοινοποιῶν αὐτὰ καὶ μικρὰ ποιῶν καὶ τοὺς βουλομένους μυνεῖσθαι ἀποτρέπων).⁹³ This 'diversion of initiates' from Eleusis is surely connected with the 'private mysteries' that were officially targeted in 415, even if the precise relationship, and the timing of the Diagoras decree, remain unclear. Key evidence here is the speech of ps.-Lysias (ca. 399) against Andokides, who had turned state's witness in the affair.

⁸⁸ For this and other impiety trials of the period, see with earlier literature Rubel 2014 (2000); Murray 1990 for discussion of the affair in terms of sympotic clubs.

⁸⁹ For the various motivations proposed, see Rubel 2014 (2000), 94–95; Murray 1990, 155, rejects the idea of parody.

⁹⁰ Arkhippos, Aristomenes, Kephisodoros: Andoc. *De myst.* 13, 15. Noted by MacDowell 1962, Appendix N; cf. Woodbury 1965, 210 n. 91 ("If this is right, they belong to the circle of impious poets, with Diagoras and Cinesias"). For the possible relevance of Diagoras to such groups, cf. also Wehrli 1961; Winiarczyk 1980, 75; Rubel 2014 (2000), 213 n. 43.

⁹¹ Pl. *Symp.* 209e5–210a4 with Dover's comments.

⁹² For the latter point, cf. Kowalzig – Wilson 2013b, 3, 7–13.

⁹³ Σ Ar. *Av.* 1073, drawing on good fourth/third century sources: Melanthios' *On the Mysteries* (FGrH 326 F 3) and Krateros' *Collection of Decrees* (FGrH 342 F 16); cf. Σ *Nub.* 829. For the affair of Diagoras, see esp. Jacoby 1959; Woodbury 1965; Winiarczyk 1979; Winiarczyk 1980; Winiarczyk 1981; Rubel 2014 (2000), 68–70.

The orator, that his audience might best appreciate the degree of the defendant's impiety, compares him with none other than Diagoras; Andokides was more impious (ἄσεβέστερος) than Diagoras because the former committed in deed (ἔργῳ) what the latter had done only through words (λόγῳ).⁹⁴ Now two book-titles—the *Apopyrgizontes Logoi* and *Phrygioi Logoi*—are indeed attributed to Diagoras by later sources. But Woodbury and Winiarczyk have convincingly argued, on the basis of the titles and the little that can be inferred of their content, that these were fourth-century or later forgeries calculated to fill a hole in later public knowledge about this pioneer 'atheist'.⁹⁵ If no genuine prose treatise by Diagoras was available even in the fourth century, he must never have produced one. But what then can ps.-Lysias mean by λόγος? Since our sources are generally agreed that Diagoras was a lyric poet and specifically a dithyrambopoios,⁹⁶ and since Diagoras' divulgence of "other people's holy rites and festivals" was clearly on a grand scale (τὰ μυστήρια πᾶσι διηγέιτο seems to go well beyond the public impact one might expect for a book at this time), the obvious medium for Diagoras' sacrilegious λόγος is a public performance—most probably the spectacular circular choruses of the City Dionysia. Perhaps it was this very incident that gave rise to the expression ἐξορχεῖσθαι τὰ μυστήρια, to 'dance out', i.e. 'divulge', the mysteries. Although this usage is attested only in later sources, it obviously assumes an earlier history and is typically connected with Eleusinian/Orphic contexts—being used twice of Diagoras himself.⁹⁷ The dithyramb's traditional interest in catabatic myths would also suit the scandal, since the Eleusinian mysteries enacted the abduction and return of Persephone; and the statement of Athenagoras, that Diagoras "displayed the Orphic λόγος in the open (εἰς μέσον)", fits both the Eleusinian context and the performance scenario proposed.⁹⁸ Recalling that even Aiskhylos was once charged for revealing the mysteries on stage—the same is said of Euripides—one may guess that Diagoras presented some sophistic interpretive allegory that was too

⁹⁴ [Lys.] *In Andoc.* 17: τοσοῦτο δ' οὗτος Διαγόρου τοῦ Μηλίου ἄσεβέστερος γεγένηται· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ λόγῳ περὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια ἱερὰ καὶ ἑορτὰς ἡσέβει, οὗτος δὲ ἔργῳ περὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ πόλει.

⁹⁵ Woodbury 1965, versus the bibliocentric arguments of Jacoby 1959; Winiarczyk 1979; Winiarczyk 1980. Janko's identification of the *Derveni Papyrus* with Diagoras' book (Janko 2001; Janko 2009) has not won general acceptance: see Betegh 2004, 373–380.

⁹⁶ Diagoras is called a διθυραμβοποιός by Σ Ar. *Nub.* 830; Σ Ar. *Ran.* 320; Sext. Emp. *Adv. Math.* 9.402. Lyric poet more generally: Σ Ar. *Ran.* 320 μελῶν ποιητής; Aristox. fr. 45/1 ap. Philodem. *Περὶ εὐσεβείας* 18 p. 85 Gomperz (the source of Diagoras PMG 738A/B, also Sext. Emp. loc. cit.); *Sud.* s.v. Διαγόρας: φιλόσοφος καὶ ᾠσμάτων ποιητής . . . τῇ λυρικῇ ἐπέθετο, τοῖς χρόνοις ὧν μετὰ Πίνδαρον καὶ Βακχylίδην, Μελαννιπίδης (Μελαννιπίδου?) δὲ πρεσβύτερος. Diagoras' encomium for Mantinea is consistent with a dithyrambic career, as is the report that Diagoras helped the Mantineian wrestler Nikodoros draft laws for his city: Philodem. *De piet.* 18 p. 85 Gomperz with Henrichs 1974 = Aristox. fr. 45/1 (*Customs of the Mantineians*) = Diagoras of Melos PMG 738; Ael. *VH* 2.23; for 'polis-encomium' and related political functions of dithyramb, Wilson 2000, 66–67; Wilson 2003a; Kowalzig – Wilson 2013b, 9–15; Fearn 2013, 135–139 et pass.

⁹⁷ Note especially its conjunction with διθυραμβοποιός in Σ Ar. *Nub.* 830: Διαγόρας ἐγένετο Μήλιος διθυραμβοποιός, ὃς τὰ ἐν Ἐλευσίνι μυστήρια ἐξορχησάμενος καὶ ἐξειπὼν ἄσεβέστατος ἐξεκρίθη; cf. Tatian. *Oratio ad Graecos* 27: Διαγόρας . . . τοῦτον ἐξορχησάμενον τὰ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις μυστήρια τετιμωρήκατε. Also Lucian *De salt.* 15 and *Pisc.* (the latter with sensible comments on how inept dramatic enactments can lead to charges of implety); Alciphron 3.36.1; *P. Oxy.* 411.25 (Alkibiades).

⁹⁸ Athenag. *Legatio sive Supplicatio pro Christianis* 4.1: μὴ μόνον τὸν Ὀρφικὸν εἰς μέσον κατατιθέντι λόγον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἐλευσίνι καὶ τὰ τῶν Καβίρων δημεύοντι μυστήρια κτλ.

heavy-handed.⁹⁹ The *Derveni Papyrus* is at least an illuminating parallel.¹⁰⁰ A vital indication comes from Epicurus' testimony (relayed by Philodemos) that Diagoras, Prodikos and Kritias (whom he compared to Bacchants, an appropriate description for a dithyrambopoios like Diagoras¹⁰¹) "explained the names of the gods by changing letters".¹⁰² This means that when in *Clouds* Aristophanes calls Sokrates 'the Melian',¹⁰³ in connection with the idea that Zeus (genitive Διός) should be understood rather as a Celestial Vortex (Δῖνος), we can be confident that the comedian does wish to evoke an idea purveyed by Diagoras himself. That there are several precedents for a cosmic 'whirl' in the pre-Socratic fragments does not undermine this suggestion; just the opposite.¹⁰⁴ But here too we can link Diagoras to his poetic activity, since the same kind of etymological manipulation is explicitly attested for the dithyramb by Plato, with Melanippides and Likymnios providing cases-in-point.¹⁰⁵ Evidently "what connects neo-dithyrambists and sophists is their apparent interest in finding truth in language".¹⁰⁶ This common impulse suggests a deeper 'scientific' connection between some cosmic Dinos and the Aristophanic Kinesias' emphasis on -δόνητος compounds among the 'meteoric' language he uses to describe his own cloud-inspired diction.¹⁰⁷ Celestial rotation would also be an ideal subject for representation in a circular dance,

⁹⁹ Aiskhylos: Heracl. Pont. fr. 170; Ael. *VH* 5.19; Euripides: *Satyros Vita Eur.* 10. See further references in Brown 1991, 43 n. 9. Cf. Clinton 1992, 90: "We do not know, in fact, how much of the (sc. Eleusinian) myth could be safely revealed".

¹⁰⁰ See n. 95 above.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Pl. *Ion* 533d-534e; *Leg.* 700d; Franklin 2013, 233.

¹⁰² Philodem. *De piet.* Part I col. 19, lines 518–541 (Obbink 1996): κα[ὶ γὰρ] παραγραμμίζ[ουσι] τὰ τ[ῶ]ν θεῶν [ὀνόμα-]τα κτλ. (trans. Obbink/Janko).

¹⁰³ The reference to Diagoras was readily recognized in antiquity, cf. Σ 829: Ἀθηναῖον δὲ ὄντα Σωκράτη(ν) τοιῶσδε Μήλιον λέγει· ὡς ἄθεον ἀπὸ Διαγόρου τοῦ Μηλίου. The story of Diagoras' crisis of faith follows, then an account of the decree: ἠντέλιξε γὰρ καὶ τὰ τῆς Δήμητρος μυστήρια καὶ τούτων κατεγέλα πρὸς ἀμύητους ἐκφέρων αὐτά. οὕτω Μήλιον νῦν τὸν Σωκράτην καλεῖ; cf. Σ 830a: Ἀρισταγόρας (corrupt) ὁ Μήλιος ἄθεος ἦν. ἀντὶ γοῦν τοῦ εἰπεῖν· ἄθεος, Μήλιος λέγει; 830b: Μήλιος· ἄθεος.

¹⁰⁴ Ar. *Nub.* 380 (αἰθέριος Δῖνος), 829–830, 1471 with Janko 2001, 8 and n. 26–27, 13. Aristophanes quite probably earned laughs from this brainy material by having a terracotta pot, also δῖνος, in place of a herm before the Phrontisterion: see Dover 1968, lxxvi and 265 ad 1473 with Σ ad loc. For the pre-Socratic parallels, Dover 1968, ad 380.

¹⁰⁵ Pl. *Crat.* 409c, where Sokrates' parodic etymology of Selene (< σελαενονεοάεια < σέλας + ἔνον + νέον + αἰεί) elicits from Hermogenes the reaction Διθυραμβῶδές γε τοῦτο τοῦνομα: cf. Ford 2013, 320 and 327 ("we may infer that the dithyrambist aspired to the enlightened, cosmic knowledge of a word-maker"), with observations (328–329) on Likymnios of Chios and his stylistic/linguistic theories; note for instance Likymnios' association of ὕβρις and Κύπρις (Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 26) and especially the derivation of Akheron < ἄχεα by both Likymnios (PMG 770a–b) and Melanippides (PMG 759); cf. LeVen 2014, 165–166.

¹⁰⁶ LeVen 2014, 166; cf. 187: "The novelty of the language of the New Musicians resides less in some linguistic tools characteristic of elevated diction (compounds, strings of adjectives, etc.) than in the way these features are used to explore the relationship between language and things."

¹⁰⁷ Ar. *Av.* 1381 (ἀεροδόνητους), 1387 (πετροδόνητα), 1402 (πετροδόνητος, mocked by Peisetairos); passage given above.

recalling both the mimetic quality of the dithyramb itself,¹⁰⁸ and the abundant literary evidence for ‘star choruses’ deriving probably from choral traditions going back to the Archaic period.¹⁰⁹ Note that δῖνος and its relations are used of dance.¹¹⁰ In any case Aristophanes’ allusion to Zeus-Dinos clarifies that Diagoras’ ‘atheism’ was not a wholesale denial of divine power (as was commonly alleged by later sources without access to the λόγος in question¹¹¹). Rather, Diagoras “introduced/proposed novel divinities” (the eventual charge against Sokrates himself¹¹²) and re-interpreted existing theology—hence his treatment of the Eleusinian mysteries, along with (allegedly) the Ὀρφικὸς λόγος and the Kabeiroi-cult of Samothrace. Nor need we assume that a poet with such interests was incapable of producing more traditional verses when the occasion required; the conventional material that Philodemos found quoted by Aristoxenos could have been composed at a different stage in Diagoras’ career, or for less culturally adventures venues than Athens (e.g. Argos and Mantinea, both attested for Diagoras¹¹³).

The Skatabasis of Kinesias

With this we may return to the ἀσέβεια of Kinesias himself. Later centuries ranked Kinesias, like Diagoras, among the early ἄθεοι. But this time there is no question of a book, only lyric poetry—most obviously the dithyramb. One incident in particular can be identified from two discontiguous verses of Aristophanes’ *Frogs*; it is further illuminated by a combination of scholia, several other Aristophanic passages and comic fragments, and what Lysias tells us about Kinesias. Most details must elude us. But perhaps the scandal can be better defined than it has been.

The trail begins with the *Frogs*’ underworld chorus. These mystic initiates, modelled on the Eleusinian procession, enter singing a summoning song of Iakkhos (an instantiation of Dionysos) that may allude to one composed by none other than Diagoras of Melos. Xanthias exclaims to Dionysos, ἄδουσι . . . τὸν Ἰακχὸν ὄνπερ ΔΙΑΓΟΡΑΣ (*Ran.* 320)—either “they are singing the very Iakkhos-song that Diagoras (sc. sang)”, or “the very Iakkhos-song that (sc. they sing when marching) through the agora (δι’ ἀγορᾶς)”. These two interpretations have been debated since antiquity. Aristarkhos believed that a reference to Diagoras was intended; the alternative view, taken by Apollodoros of Tarsus, is followed by most modern editors.¹¹⁴ (It may be of

¹⁰⁸ Pl. *Resp.* 3.394bc; Arist. *Poet.* 1447a13–16, b24–28, 1461b30–31; [Arist.] *Prob.* 19.15; see further Lawler 1950, 83–84; Zimmermann 1992, 127–128; Kugelmeier 1996, 225–226; Calame 2013, 341–352; Peponi 2013; LeVen 2014, Chapter 5; and below.

¹⁰⁹ Cosmic dithyramb and star-choruses: Lawler 1960; Lawler 1964, 12–13. For Alkman fr. 1, see Ferrari 2008 (whose overall thesis I find persuasive).

¹¹⁰ LSJ s.v. δῖνος I.3, δινεύω/δινέω II.

¹¹¹ Woodbury 1965, 208–210 clarified the nature of Diagoras’ ‘atheism’ against the semantic history of the Gk. ἄθεος; this view is upheld by Winiarczyk 1979; Winiarczyk 1980; Winiarczyk 1981, XI–XIII.

¹¹² Σ Ar. *Ran.* 320: Διαγόρας μελῶν ποιητῆς ἄθεος, ὃς καὶ καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσηγεῖτο, ὥσπερ Σωκράτης; cf. Σ *Nub.* 830: βλάβος εἰς τὸ θεῖον.

¹¹³ See n. 96.

¹¹⁴ Σ Ar. *Ran.* 320. Radermacher 1921, 181, held that Apollodoros’ reading requires too violent a brachylogy.

course that Aristophanes *wished* ΔΙΑΓΟΡΑΣ to be ambivalent.¹¹⁵) Ordinarily one would treat an obscure personal name as a more difficult reading, with ‘through the agora’ a kind of banalization.¹¹⁶ That is offset in the present case by the plausibility of the Eleusinian procession passing through the Agora after leaving the Iakkheion.¹¹⁷ But this very point, one may counter, lends still further weight to Diagoras, whose notoriety was connected precisely with the Eleusinian mysteries. So ultimately the real challenge is to explain how the exiled ἄθεος could appear here in a basically positive context.¹¹⁸ To my mind, however, having the *Frogs*-chorus sing an Iakkhos-song reminiscent of Diagoras seems entirely plausible considering that only two years earlier (407) Alkibiades himself—the most prominent profaner of the mysteries during the scandal—had pulled off a stunning public-relations coup when the Eleusinian priesthood not only revoked its curse against him, but appointed him mystagogue and leader of the great procession that had been suspended since the Spartan occupation of Decelea in 413 (on Alkibiades’ own advice!).¹¹⁹ Inevitably this grand event will have jumped to the audience’s mind when they saw Aristophanes’ parading chorus, all the more so since the Eleusinian procession had now been once again suspended.¹²⁰ Given the playwright’s plea for general public forgiveness and the recall of exiles in the face of the present crisis,¹²¹ an evocation of Diagoras is perhaps not entirely inappropriate. This would be all the more permissible if the Melian poet had recently died; compare Aristophanes’ now-respectful treatment of Kratinos in the same scene.¹²²

In any case, approaching the initiates through the eyes of Dionysos himself gives us a remarkable ‘back-stage’ view of divine epiphany through song. We arrive just in time to hear the call for εὐφημία and the exclusion of the uninitiated. This proclamation is modelled on the πρόρρησις of the Eleusinian mysteries, but is ingeniously modified—notably by reference to the “Bacchic-rites of bull-eating Kratinos”—to present comedy as a special mystery-cult of its own.¹²³ And with this we return unexpectedly to Kinesias, whom a pointed allusion banishes from this happy troupe (354–366):

Χο. εὐφημεῖν χρὴ καΐξιστασθαι τοῖς ἡμετέροισι χοροῖσιν,
 ὅστις ἄπειρος τοιῶνδε λόγων ἢ γνώμην μὴ καθαρεύει,
 ἢ γενναίων ὄργια Μουσῶν μήτ’ εἶδεν μήτ’ ἐχόρευσεν,
 μηδὲ Κρατίνου τοῦ ταυροφάγου γλώττης Βακχεῖ’ ἐτελέσθη,

¹¹⁵ Cf. Σ. Ar. *Ran.* 320: παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν δέ φησιν κτλ.

¹¹⁶ I thank Marco Ercoles for his helpful observations here.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Graf 1974, 49 n. 42; Dover 1993, ad 320.

¹¹⁸ Hence Dover 1993, ad 320: “It seems a poor joke and theatrically pointless to say, just at the moment when we are expecting to see and hear the chorus of initiates, that this chorus is singing the song which is or was sung by someone who rejected and ridiculed initiation.” But if one accepts the dithyrambic interpretation of Diagoras’ λόγος proposed above, ‘rejection’ and ‘ridicule’ may not be an entirely fair description of the poet’s original intent—even if he was charged with precisely this in 415.

¹¹⁹ Xen. *Hell.* 1.4.20; Plut. *Alcib.* 34.3–6; cf. Segal 1961, 236–237 n. 44.

¹²⁰ Edmonds 2004, 119, 147.

¹²¹ Ar. *Ran.* 686–704 with Dover 1993, 73–75.

¹²² The date of Diagoras’ death is unknown, but will not have been far from 405: Winiarczyk 1979, 212–213; Winiarczyk 1981, VII.

¹²³ For this passage, see recently Halliwell 2008, 211–214; Rosen 2015, 80–83.

ἢ βωμολόχοις ἔπεσιν χαίρει μὴ ᾽ν καιρῷ τοῦτο ποιούντων,
...
ἢ κατατιλᾷ τῶν Ἑκαταίων κυκλίοισι χοροῖσιν ὑπάδων

Chorus: Let him keep a reverent silence and stand clear of our choruses—
he who has not experienced these tales or is impure in judgment,
and has neither seen nor danced the Muses' noble rites,
nor been initiated in the Bacchic-mysteries of bull-eating Kratinos'
tongue,
or enjoys buffoonish remarks when people are doing this out of
season . . .
or who shits upon the EKATAIA while accompanying dithyrambic
choruses¹²⁴ . . .

The startling last line here obviously refers to something very specific, and the scholia, along with several later lexicographers (commenting on κατατιλᾷ), are unanimous that it alludes to Kinesias. The scholia offer a range of explanations that modern scholars have tended to ignore in favor of their own hypotheses, with considerable variety thanks to several interlocking puzzles in Aristophanes' diction. The crucial problem is how to understand EKATAIA. Modern analysis has been misled, I shall argue, by the word's two most familiar meanings—the Hekate-dinners and Hekate-shrines, discussed above—though how either of these could accord with a dithyrambic context is hardly obvious: it is hard to imagine several Hekate-shrines, much less Hekate-dinners, being brought into the performance space of (probably) the City Dionysia.¹²⁵ Critics are also divided as to whether κατατιλᾷ should be taken literally, or is merely a colorful expression for 'insult'.¹²⁶ Ehrenberg, seeking further support for his proposition that "religion ha[d] lost a good deal of its power, at least for many", boldly embraced the most literal reading: "the images of Hekate could be soiled by men engaged in religious dancing".¹²⁷ But most scholars who are prepared to take κατατιλᾷ seriously nevertheless shy away from imagining that even Kinesias could intentionally defecate during an actual cult performance. This has led to the prevailing theory that the poet suffered an embarrassing attack of incontinence during a dithyrambic performance, connected somehow with the wasting disease known to Lysias and Plato Comicus.¹²⁸ The fatal flaw of this approach is Lysias' clear statement

¹²⁴ There is some debate about how the degree of terminological overlap between κύκλιοι χοροί and διθύραμβος (see esp. Ceccarelli 2013); but such doubts cannot apply to the present Athenian context and the involvement of Kinesias.

¹²⁵ The necessary choral context for which I shall argue will exclude the otherwise attractive suggestion by Kraus 1960, 91 n. 453, that the incident relates to Hekate-shrines as a receiving-place for refuse deriving from purification rites (with excrement explicitly mentioned in CIL III 1966); cf. Kugelmeier 1996, 241 and n. 419.

¹²⁶ Cf. Ar. fr. 157.3 (noted by Sommerstein 1996, 189).

¹²⁷ Ehrenberg 1962, 267.

¹²⁸ For Kinesias' disease, see further below. Incontinence theory: Dover 1993, 241–242 ad 366; Dunbar 1998, 661; Lada-Richards 1999, 230 n. 36; Bliquez 2008, 323. Cf. Σ ad loc.: ἢ κατατιλᾷ τῶν Ἑκαταίων, ἦτοι κατὰ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων τῆς Ἑκάτης κόπρον ἐκκρίνει διάρρυστον, τουτέστι ὕγρην, ὑπάδων τοῖς χοροῖς κυκλίοις ἡγουν λυρικοῖς ποιήμασιν. But this notice probably affirms nothing as τιλᾶν and

that Kinesias was prepared to *commit* acts that would be shameful for others even to *say*; and that he was derided for this, year after year, by the comic poets.¹²⁹ This leaves little doubt that Lysias had in mind the very episode to which Aristophanes alluded in *Frogs*, *Gerytades* (fr. 156), and a passage from *Ecclesiazusae* (391?).¹³⁰ We must therefore reject the theory of Kinesias' incontinence, in all its variations, as a scholarly factoid.¹³¹ The poet's sacrilege was due to some *intentional* action.

An alternative solution has been to unbolt the participial phrase κυκλίοισι χοροῖσιν ὑπάδων from κατατιλᾷ and construe it more closely with ὅστις (355), thus understanding the circumstances loosely; this way the defecation incident can take place independently of a dithyramb, merely in a season when Kinesias was otherwise training a chorus.¹³² Such a view must be tacitly assumed by O. Murray, who, seeking a parallel with the Triballoi-club and their pilfering of Hekate-dinners, suggested that Kinesias shat on Ἐκάτης δεῖπνα during a komos with his own ἑταιρεία.¹³³ This proposal is initially quite attractive.¹³⁴ But a further passage in *Frogs* compels us to reject any interpretation that does not *directly* link κατατιλᾷ τῶν Ἐκαταίων with the choral context of κυκλίοισι χοροῖσιν ὑπάδων.

Earlier in the play Herakles, the great Eleusinian initiate who first braved an underworld journey, explains to Dionysos what landmarks to look for *en route*—much as one might learn from an Orphic gold-leaf tablet, or from the 'Sacred Drama' of the Eleusinian mysteries itself¹³⁵—before reaching “a most beautiful light”, the “breath of pipe-music”, and the chorus of mystic initiates. After crossing the bottomless abyss in Kharon's boat, and braving “countless snakes and most terrifying beasts” (ὄφεις καὶ

τῖλος themselves already imply “thin stool” (LSJ, s.vv.). If κατατιλᾷν does indeed imply diarrhoea specifically, this can be explained, I believe, by the joke's repeated connection with saffron-colored garments, as only liquid excrement would approximate to the necessary ‘dye’ (see further below).

¹²⁹ Fr. 53 Thalheim: τοιαῦτα περὶ θεοῦς ἐξαμαρτάνων, ἃ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις αἰσχρόν ἐστι καὶ λέγειν κτλ.

¹³⁰ As concluded long ago by Maas 1922, 480 line 45–51.

¹³¹ An elaborate and valiant example is Sommerstein 1996, 170 and 189: “Presumably on some recent occasion a collection of such offerings [i.e. Hekataia] had been found fouled with excrement, and a joke went the rounds that Cinesias must have done it . . . his diarrhoea and his alleged impiety combining to make him the obvious suspect . . . Alternatively the passage may refer metaphorically to a poem by Cinesias which was considered disrespectful to Hecate or her worship, the metaphor being chosen with reference to Cinesias' well-known affliction.”

¹³² Kugelmeier 1996, 241–243; cf. Lawler 1964, 9–10 on the sacred status of those preparing for such performances.

¹³³ Murray 1990, 157, building on Calhoun 1913, 30–32, 36 (q.v. esp. for the Triballoi); cf. Maas 1922, 480 line 45–51 “ein dem Hermokopidenskandal verwandter Frevel”.

¹³⁴ In support of Murray's view one might add that such a prank could be understood both in terms of the Ἐκαταῖα-custom itself (food spoiled by anti-food) and inter-club rivalry (one-upping a known prank while presenting rival pranksters a nasty surprise). One might even suggest some connection between the name Κακοδαίμονισταί and the act of defecating (κακκᾶν) on something sacred. And while Κακοδαίμονισταί finds a more obvious *lexical* counterpart in Ἀγαθοδαίμονισταί, Lysias himself pairs it rather with Νοσηνιστᾶι (see above). This in turn might evoke the Hekate-dinners, which were put out on the New-Moon day; although Kinesias' club is said to have preferred other, inauspicious days for their meetings, this would not prevent pranks on other occasions (cf. Kugelmeier 1996, 242, thinking of a parodic occasional cult-song by Kinesias). Ultimately, however, I believe that we must eschew any interpretive path not directly connected to dithyrambic performance: see further below.

¹³⁵ For these well-known correspondences, see generally Segal 1961; Graf 1974, 40–50; Bowie 1993, Chapter 228–238; Lada-Richards 1999; Edmonds 2004.

θηρί' ὄψει μυρία / δεινότατα, 143–144), Dionysos must first traverse a great stretch of muck (βόρβορον πολύν, 145) in which are plunged many of the same sinners treated as heroes by Adikos Logos in the *Clouds*. This much was current mystic theology: that the uninitiated cannot complete their post-mortem underworld journey, but must lie in mud akin to their unpurified and/or wicked state, is attributed by Plato to unnamed poets and mystic initiators (and is well paralleled in later sources).¹³⁶ Unique to Aristophanes, however, is the addition of “ever-flowing excrement” (καὶ σκῶρ ἀείνων, 146). For Dover, the introduction of σκῶρ was simply something that “comedy cannot resist”.¹³⁷ Certainly the grandiose absurdity of ἀείνων, which recalls the ever-flowing fountain of some Orphic tablets, is classic Aristophanes. But there is more to it.

Dionysos, when he hears about the sinners who are mired in the σκῶρ ἀείνων, adds a category of his own—“whoever learned the πυρρίχη of Kinesias”. This apparent reference to a shield-dance has puzzled many scholars. Some have thought that Aristophanes used the term as a way of describing the hyperkinetic choreography of Kinesian dance.¹³⁸ Others seek a more literal connection and suggest that Kinesias composed an actual πυρρίχη.¹³⁹ A corrupt and lacunose passage of Diomedes the Grammarian *may* attest that the metrical foot called *pyrrichius* was sometimes known as ‘the Kinesias’; but as he cites the very verse with which we are concerned, this may be no more than—at best—a meticians’ usage derived from Aristophanes himself.¹⁴⁰ (The same argument applies to cognate material in Σ Ar. *Ran.* 153 and Suda s.v. πυρρίχη.) There remains a possible connection between Kinesias and shields in the Pherekrates fragment mentioned above.¹⁴¹ It is certainly conceivable, given the inclusive and experimental nature of the contemporary dithyramb, and its juxtaposition

¹³⁶ Pl. *Phaed.* 69c (ὅς ἂν ἀμύητος καὶ ἀτέλεστος εἰς Ἄιδου ἀφίκηται ἐν βορβόρῳ κείσεται, cf. Olympiodoros ad loc. παρωδεῖ ἔπος Ὀρφικόν = Kern fr. 235), 111d–e, 113a–b and *Resp.* 363d–e (τοὺς δὲ ἀνοσίους αὖ καὶ ἀδίκους εἰς πηλὸν τινα κατορύττουσιν ἐν Ἄιδου), cf. 533d; Plut. fr. 178 Sandbach; Arist. 22.10; Plot. 1.6.6 (αἱ τελεταὶ ὁρθῶς αἰνίττονται τὸν μὴ κεκαθαρμένον καὶ εἰς Ἄιδου κείσεσθαι ἐν βορβόρῳ, ὅτι τὸ μὴ καθαρὸν βορβόρῳ διὰ κάκην φίλον); Diog. Laert. 6.39. Cf. Dieterich 1893, 73, 82–83; Rohde 1907, 240 and 248 n. 15; Graf 1974, 103–107; Dover 1993, 209 ad 145; Edmonds 2004, 136 and n. 67; Bernabé – Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008, 20 n. 46 (with secondary literature, cf. 56).

¹³⁷ Dover 1993, 209 ad 145.

¹³⁸ Lawler 1950, 85; Lawler 1964, 19–20; Dover 1993, 210 ad 152–153; Ieranò 1997, 310.

¹³⁹ Sommerstein 1996, 170, who would even date it to the Great Panathenaia of 406; but note that this would not accord with the usual dating to 408 or 407 of Aristophanes’ *Gerytades*, since that play’s River of Diarrhoea (fr. 156) must refer back to the same Kinesian ‘shittyramb’: see further below.

¹⁴⁰ Diom. Gram. 1.475, 9–25 Keil, *Gramm. Lat.* Corruption makes it unclear whether *ipse* in *Sed ipse a pedum mobilitate Cinesias cognominatus est* refers to the pyrrichius foot (hence nicknamed ‘Kinesias’, so Borthwick 1968b, 65); or to Kinesias himself, in which case Diomedes may merely be alluding to an etymology of Kinesias from κίνησις—known from the cognate material in Σ Ar. *Ran.* 153 (Κινησίας διθυραμβοποιός . . . ἐν τοῖς χοροῖς πολλῇ κινήσει ἐχρήτο) and *Sud.* s.v. πυρρίχη—to explain why Aristophanes connected Kinesias with the πυρρίχη in *Frogs*. See Ceccarelli 1995, 293–295; Ieranò 1997, 310; Ceccarelli 1998, 42–45; Bliquez 2008, 325.

¹⁴¹ For which see Zielinski 1885, 267 n. 2; Düring 1945, 185; Lawler 1950, 79; Borthwick 1968b, 63–66; Restani 1983, 150–1; Barker 1984–1989, 1.236–7; Zimmermann 1993, 40; Dobrov – Urios-Aparisi 1995, 153; Franklin 2013, 229, 234 (for the possible relevance of Ar. *Nub.* 987–989).

with the original incident (or even reproduced an expression used by Kinesias himself before the whole city: see further below).¹⁴⁵ Note too that, given the context, the otherwise ordinary οἶμοι κακοδαίμων surely alludes to the name of Kinesias' ἑταιρεία: the audience is primed to see Blepyros' defecation as a Kinesian act, and any who miss the allusion are set straight by the neighbor's explicit pronouncement. Finally it is possible that we are meant to think of Blepyros as accidentally relieving himself on or before a Hekate-shrine, as these were often located outside of houses; his self-encouragement to go *anywhere*, since it is night, could 'prepare the ground' for him to void himself (unwittingly) in just the spot that should have been avoided. This would further motivate the neighbor's laughing suggestion that Kinesias was himself defecating there. But it must be emphasized that the joke's most basic trigger is the *color of the garment* that Blepyros is wearing—a point to which we shall return.

Thus *Ecclesiazusae* guarantees that, whether or not Kinesias ever made real use of pyrrhic dance, Aristophanes in *Frogs* wished above all to tax the poet with what Bliquez calls a 'potty dance', but which might well be termed Kinesias' 'shittyramb'. For three jokes about the same poet, all involving excrement, must allude to one and the same reality. Note especially how the two *Frogs* passages complement each other, with one referring to Kinesias as "accompanying dithyrambic choruses", the other to those who "learned the πυρρίχη of Kinesias". Chorus and chorus-trainer are thus reunited to share alike in the guilty performance.¹⁴⁶ I conclude therefore that Aristophanes had in mind a *specific dithyrambic performance* that somehow brought together EKATAIA—the identity of which remains to be determined—and some intentional 'act' of defecation, even if this was only a dramatic representation of some sort.

Suddenly the *Frogs* scholia (and cognate material in the *Suda* s.v. κατατιλῶ) become rather more interesting. Naturally some autoschediasm must still be weeded out. One bland statement—"(Kinesias) shat upon Hekate while singing" (οὗτος γὰρ ᾄδων κατετίλησε τῆς Ἑκάτης)—is obviously derived from Aristophanes himself. Another thinks rather vaguely of "an impious state of mind *vis-à-vis* the statues of Hekate, when he attends the festival; Kinesias has done this" (ἀσεβῶς διάκειται περὶ τὰ τῆς Ἑκάτης ἀγάλματα, ὅτε πανηγυρίζει. Κινησίας δὲ τοῦτο πεποίηκε). The seemingly concrete reference to ἀγάλματα here, I believe, is no more than a guess from EKATAIA's common reference to Hekate-shrines. More compelling therefore is the Jim-Morrison-like stunt proposed by another scholiast: "the dithyrambic poet . . . introduced Hekate in a drama and shat upon her" (εἰσήνεγκεν ἐν δράματι τὴν Ἑκάτην καὶ κατετίλησεν αὐτῆς). This explanation, by eschewing any obvious interpretation of EKATAIA, is a kind of *lectio difficilior*. And since δράματι can readily cover a

¹⁴⁵ I thank Ettore Cingano for helpful discussion on this point.

¹⁴⁶ We thus resolve the ambiguity of κυκλίοισι χοροῖσιν ὑπάδων, which by itself might refer not to an accompanying singer but rather to the dancers themselves (Radermacher 1921, 192). That Kinesias was himself involved in the offending dithyramb was rightly maintained by Dover 1993, 242, on the strength of Kinesias' appearances in *Birds* and (by implication) *Ecclesiazusae*; similarly for Sommerstein 1996, 189, *Frogs* 366 "shows that dithyrambic poets still sometimes performed their own compositions, in particular no doubt . . . elaborate non-strophic preludes". The self-performance of dithyrambic *anabolai* is still considered a normal arrangement by Pl. *Resp.* 394b–c; Arist. *Rhet.* 1409b21–28.

mimetic dithyramb,¹⁴⁷ we are encouraged to contemplate some outrageous *staging* of a myth relating to Hekate, without having to accept that Kinesias *literally* defecated upon some statue or shrine of the goddess (or rather several, given Aristophanes' plural!).¹⁴⁸

A further scholion points in the same direction. The transmitted text is problematic: Aristophanes mocked Kinesias "since he blushed after composing a poem about Hekate" (ἐπειδὴ ἠρυσθρίασε ποῖημα γράψας εἰς Ἑκάτην). ἠρυσθρίασε has been rightly challenged, both because cognate material in the *Suda* shows corruption (with the unintelligible ἡρυσθρίασε), and since nothing else in the biographical tradition indicates that Kinesias would ever feel remorse. Yet none of the suggested emendations is very satisfactory. While Fritzsche's ἐπανηγυρίαζε proceeds from the πανηγυρίζει of the scholion cited above, it fails both for not providing a damning detail to explain why Aristophanes targeted Kinesias, and because the proposed verb in -ιάζειν is unparalleled (the normal form has -ίζειν). The latter objection applies also to Hermann's ἐγεφυσθρίαζε ('abuse from the bridge', normally γεφυρίζειν), which is besides hard to reconcile with choral performance at the City Dionysia or some other dithyrambic venue. Thus Kugelmeier, in his review of the problem, fell back on Schuringa's handy <οὐκ> ἠρυσθρίασε.¹⁴⁹ While this proposal restores Kinesias to a comfortable state of shamelessness, ultimately it too lacks conviction for not telling us what Kinesias *did* do that others might find blush-worthy. Therefore I propose to read here ἐπυρρίασε, a paleographically simple solution that perfectly satisfies the known context—Kinesias is mocked "since, after composing a poem about Hekate, he soiled himself". The resulting correspondence between the scholion's two basic elements and those of Aristophanes' own text—that is, defecation and poetry—assures us that this emendation is right.¹⁵⁰ The scholion evidently derives from an ancient observation of some substance, since it avoids parroting the obvious κατατιλᾶν in favor of the special scatological idiom πυρρίαῖν—hardly an obvious synonym for the casual paraphraser, yet well supported by Aristophanic parallels. Indeed this very word, I believe, leads us to the missing piece in the puzzle of Kinesias' shittyramb—an otherwise well-known scene from *Frogs* itself.

Dionysos and Xanthias are reunited after respectively crossing and running around Kharon's lake (179–270). Xanthias has passed through an area of "darkness and muck" (σκότος καὶ βόρβορος, 273) in which he saw the father-beaters, perjurers (274–275), and presumably other sinners enumerated by Herakles (145–151). The σκῶρ ἀείνων is conspicuously missing from Xanthias' account (an omission that may be slyly acknowledged by the verbal echo of σκότος). But not for long. The slave suggests that they advance quickly since they are now in the place of the terrible beasts (οὗτος ὁ τόπος ἐστὶν οὗ τὰ θηρία / τὰ δεινὰ ἔφασκ' ἐκεῖνος, 277–278). We need not be troubled that this topographical sequence (muck > beasts) is the reverse of what Herakles had

¹⁴⁷ See Ieranò 1997, 179–185, with further references; cf. Lawler 1964, 6.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Lada-Richards 1999, 230 n. 36 ("The allegation may refer to a fictitious action staged in his dramas").

¹⁴⁹ Kugelmeier 1996, 240 and n. 417.

¹⁵⁰ The scholion's ἠρυσθρίασε would thus preserve both the overall length of ἐπυρρίασε (vs. ἡρυσθρίασε) and the word's two rhos. Alternatively, ἠρυσθρίασε may have been introduced as an unappreciative gloss of ἐπυρρίασε (cf. LSJ s.v. πυρρίαω), which it then displaced.

foretold; by quickly disposing the muck-mired sinners—with a passing joke at the audience’s expense (276)—Aristophanes was free to develop an extended routine on Dionysos’ cowardice (279–311). After the god blusters that he would very much like to defeat a monster to commemorate his journey (279–284), Xanthias reports a frightening sound and warns that a great shape-changing beast is approaching (θηρίον μέγα . . . παντοδαπὸν γίγνεται, 288–289). Whether such a creature was actually staged, or Xanthias is merely bating his master, is disputed.¹⁵¹ In any case Dionysos, when told that the beast has transformed itself successively into cow, mule, beautiful woman, and dog (289–292), concludes that he is facing Empousa and flies into a panic, wailing and flailing about the stage. The crisis once passed, the god exclaims (307–309):

Δι. οἶμοι τάλας, ὥς ὠχρίασ’ αὐτὴν ἰδὼν.
 Ξα. ὁδὶ δὲ δείσας ὑπερεπυρρίασέ σου.
 Δι. οἶμοι, πόθεν μοι τὰ κακὰ ταυτὶ προσέπεσεν;

Dionysos: Wretched me, how pale I went when I saw her!

Xanthias: But this here (ὁδί) turned yellow-brown for you (ὑπερεπυρρίασε) in its fear!

Dionysos: Alas, whence did *these* κακά befall me?!

Despite an interesting array of alternative suggestions in the scholia, it is certain that the god has soiled himself here (as he will again at 479).¹⁵² The passage of *Ecclesiazusae* discussed above clarifies that the present joke exploits the saffron-colored robe Dionysos has worn for his journey (κροκωτός, 46; cf. κροκωτίδιον, *Eccl.* 332).¹⁵³ The more urgent point just now, however, is the precise trigger of Dionysos’ incontinence. C. G. Brown argued convincingly that the encounter with Empousa reflects a phase of initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries, when initiands would stumble about in the darkness and confront various (staged) phantasms before reaching the blessed revelation that awaited them; this was a kind of mystic rehearsal for the ordeals of an eventual underworld journey.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, as Borthwick noted, Xanthias’

¹⁵¹ The latter view is favored by Lada-Richards 1999, 71 and n. 100.

¹⁵² Henderson 1991, 191 §402 (with further parallels for the stimulus of fear in comedy); Dover 1993, 231; Sommerstein 1996, 200 ad 479; Bliquez 2008, 324.

¹⁵³ Presumably this is what is meant by ὁδί in 308: Marzullo 1961, 390–391; Dover 1993, 231; Sommerstein 1996, 182 ad 308.

¹⁵⁴ Brown 1991, building on Borthwick 1968a; cf. Clinton 1992, 84–86; Dover 1993, 208 ad 143; Sommerstein 180 ad 289–296; Lada-Richards 1999, 70–71, 90–94. Key ancient passages are Pl. *Phaedr.* 250b–c; Plut. fr. 178 Sandbach ap. Stobaeus 4.52.49 (πλάναι τὰ πρῶτα καὶ περιδρομαὶ κοπῶδεις καὶ διὰ σκότους τινὲς ὑποποτοὶ πορεῖται καὶ ἀτέλεστοι, εἴτα πρὸ τοῦ τέλους αὐτοῦ τὰ δεινὰ πάντα, φρίκη καὶ τρόμος καὶ ἰδρὼς καὶ θάμβος· ἐκ δὲ τούτου φῶς τι θαυμάσιον ἀπήντησεν καὶ τόποι καθαροὶ καὶ λειμῶνες ἐδέξαντο, φωνὰς καὶ χορείας καὶ σεμνότητας ἀκουσμάτων ἱερῶν καὶ φασμάτων ἁγίων ἔχοντες); Luc. *Catapl.* 22: ΜΙΚΥΛΛΟΣ εἶπέ μοι,—ἐτελέσθης γάρ, ὦ Κυνίσκε, δῆλον ὅτι τὰ Ἐλευσίνια—οὐχ ὅμοια τοῖς ἐκεῖ τὰ ἐνθάδε σοι δοκεῖ; ΚΥΝΙΣΚΟΣ: Εὖ λέγεις· ἰδοὺ γοῦν προσέρχεται δαδουχοῦσά τις φοβερὸν τι καὶ ἀπειλητικὸν προσβλέπουσα. ἦ ἄρα που Ἐρινὺς ἐστὶν (i.e. Teisiphone); Dio Chrys. 4.90 (φάσματα πολλὰ καὶ ποικίλα); Aristid. *Or.* 22.3 (Jebb 257.3); Procl. *Resp.* 2.185.4 (Kroll); Origen *Cels.* 4.10; Lactant. *Div. inst.* 23. Further ancient phantasms collected by Graf 1974, 134 n. 34.

exhortation to “Take heart”, after the trial (302–305), is modelled on a mystic formula.¹⁵⁵ Dionysos’ defecation is a natural enough extension of the experience described by Plutarch as “terror, trembling, sweat, and fright” (φόβη καὶ τρόμος καὶ ἰδρὼς καὶ θάμβος), with parallels elsewhere in comedy.¹⁵⁶ The sources for underworld phantasms usually speak of apparitions more generally; but these and Empousa alike lead quite directly to the province of Hekate,¹⁵⁷ and thus back to the mystery of Kinesias. A scholiast here calls Empousa “a demonic apparition unleashed by Hekate” (φάντασμα δαιμονιῶδες ὑπὸ Ἑκάτης ἐπιπεμπόμενον, Σ *Ran.* 293), but notes that “others (sc. consider her) the same as Hekate” (ἔνιοι δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν τῇ Ἑκάτῃ), in support of which he cites an exchange from Aristophanes’ *Ταγηνισταί* (*The Broilers*). In this fragment one character invokes “Chthonian Hekate, wound about with coils of snakes”, to which another responds, “Why are you summoning Empousa?”¹⁵⁸ This mention of snakes recalls Hekate’s association with that animal elsewhere, as well as the serpents that Herakles predicted Dionysos would meet during his underworld journey (143).¹⁵⁹ Hekate is further suggested in *Frogs* by Empousa’s assumption of dog-shape—the very form that prompts Dionysos to identify the apparition.¹⁶⁰ Empousa’s shape-shifting ability is further attested by Demosthenes, who tells us that Aiskhines’ mother was widely known as ‘Empousa’ for being prepared “to do or undergo everything”.¹⁶¹ The orator insinuates that she is a prostitute; but her own occupation as a mystery-cult worker must be equally relevant.¹⁶² Idomeneus of Lampsakos, commenting on this passage a few generations later, explained that Empousa “appeared from shadowy places to the initiates”.¹⁶³ Euripides also knew Hekate as a dispatcher of phantasms, and an unattributed tragic fragment refers to them as the “κῶμος of chthonian Hekate”.¹⁶⁴ That Empousa was one of these

¹⁵⁵ Borthwick 1968a, 201–202.

¹⁵⁶ See text in n. 154. For involuntary defecation as the ultimate comic outcome of bodily urgency, cf. Henderson 1991, 191 §400.

¹⁵⁷ See with further references Rohde 1907, 590–595; Johnston 1990, 34–35, 135–136.

¹⁵⁸ Ar. fr. 515: (A.) χθονία θ’ Ἑκάτη / σπείρας ὄφεων ἐλελιζομένη. / (B.) τί καλεῖς τὴν Ἐμπουσαν; Cf. the *scholia recentiora Tzetzae* to the same passage: τὴν Ἐμπουσαν οἱ μὲν αὐτὴν τὴν Ἑκάτην οἶονται εἶναι, οἱ δὲ φάντασμα δαιμονιῶδες ὑπὸ τῆς Ἑκάτης πεμπόμενον καὶ τὰς μορφὰς ἐναλλάττον κτλ. An abbreviated version appears in Hesych. s.v. Ἐμπουσα· φάσμα δαιμονιῶδες ὑπὸ Ἑκάτης ἐπιπεμπόμενον καί, ὥς τινες, ἐνὶ ποδὶ χρώμενον. Ἀριστοφάνης δὲ τὴν Ἑκάτην ἔφη Ἐμπουσαν.

¹⁵⁹ The link of Hekate and snakes noted by Brown 1991, 48; cf. Kraus 1960, 87, 157.

¹⁶⁰ See, with reference to this passage, Brown 1991, 47 n. 30; cf. Kraus 1960, 25–26, 33, 60, 89; Sommerstein 1996, 180 (ad 293); Johnston 1990, 134–142.

¹⁶¹ Dem. 18.130: τὴν δὲ μητέρα . . . ἦν Ἐμπουσαν ἅπαντες ἴσασι καλουμένην, ἐκ τοῦ πάντα ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν δηλονότι ταύτης τῆς ἐπωνυμίας τυχοῦσαν.

¹⁶² Brown 1991, 43–46.

¹⁶³ Idomeneus of Lampsakos *FGrH* 338 F 2 = Bekker. Anecd.: Ἐμπουσα: Ἐμπουσα φάσμα ἐστὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς Ἑκάτης πεμπομένων, εἰς πολλὰς ἀλλασσόμενον μορφάς . . . Ἐκλήθη οὖν ἡ μήτηρ Αἰσχίνου Ἐμπουσα, ὥς μὲν λέγει Δημοσθένης, ἀπὸ τοῦ πάντα ποιεῖν καὶ πάσχειν (καὶ γὰρ τὸ φάσμα παντόμορφον)· ὥς δὲ Ἰδομενεὺς φησι Περὶ δημαγωγῶν, ἐπεὶ ἀπὸ σκοτεινῶν τόπων ἀνεφαίνετο τοῖς μουσμένοις. Brown 1991, 43–46, argues against the usual view that Aiskhines’ mother was involved in Sabazius-cult; the reference to τοῖς μουσμένοις should of itself imply the Eleusinian mysteries (cf. Graf 1974, 29 n. 36, 43).

¹⁶⁴ Eur. *Hel.* 569–570: (Με.) ὦ φωσφόρ’ Ἑκάτη, πέμπε φάσματ’ εὐμενῇ. / (Ελ.) οὐ νυκτίφαντον πρόπολον Ἐνοδίας μ’ ὀρᾷς (the appeal for φάσματ’ εὐμενῇ assumes the existence of sinister ones. See

apparitions is further attested by her definition as φάσμα Ἑκαταῖον in two ancient lexica.¹⁶⁵ This usage naturally implies that collectively Hekate-phantasms could be termed φάσματα Ἑκαταῖα or simply τὰ Ἑκαταῖα. And by great good fortune, a stray scholion to Apollonios of Rhodes, discussing Hekate as ‘Brimo’, refers to Hekate’s apparitions precisely as τὰ καλούμενα Ἑκαταῖα (“the Hekataia, as they are known”); Hekate herself, the notice continues, was also known as Empousa for her ability to change shape.¹⁶⁶

Henceforth, I submit, we must avoid any thought of Hekate-shrines or -dinners, and understand the *Frogs*’ κατατιλᾷ τῶν Ἑκαταίων to mean rather κατατιλᾷ τῶν φαντασμάτων τῶν ὑπὸ Ἑκάτης ἐπιπεμπομένων. This relieves us, first, of the various staging difficulties posed by the usual hypotheses. Second, we can now account for a final, cryptic scholion that glosses τῶν Ἑκαταίων as “the mysteries of Hekate” (τῶν τῆς Ἑκάτης μυστηρίων, Σ *Ran.* 366). This is surely a vestige of some more learned comment, being otherwise inexplicable from anything obvious in Aristophanes himself, yet perfectly appropriate to τὰ Ἑκαταῖα as underworld phantasms encountered during the ordeal of mystic initiation; or, by a natural extension, to such an ordeal itself. While Hekate’s official position in Eleusinian ritual is not otherwise well documented,¹⁶⁷ the goddess does play an important role in the associated mythology, specifically in the search for and anodos of Persephone.¹⁶⁸ But we need not insist here on a strict Eleusinian interpretation of *Frogs*—Athenian poets had to be careful where they trod¹⁶⁹—and mysteries of Hekate are in any case attested on nearby Aigina (said to have been founded by Orpheus), on Samothrace (amalgamated with the Kabeiroi), and at Lagina in Caria.¹⁷⁰

I conclude, therefore, that Aristophanes has placed Kinesias in the underworld not simply because he deserves to be there, but because his crime was committed while in the underworld himself—that is, through some dithyrambic treatment of chthonian Hekate and her phantasms. That the genre itself had been long been concerned with catabatic, mystic themes makes this perfectly credible. Yet if this interpretation is right, we are now confronted by a startling alignment of what Kinesias is *accused* of having done, and what Dionysos himself actually *does* do in the Empousa scene. It would seem, therefore, that Aristophanes is re-staging—on his own terms of course—the offending ‘scene’ from the shittyramb of Kinesias. This hypothesis lets us satisfy the required choral context, as established above, while still allowing Kinesias’ defecation to be enough of an *action*—i.e. dramatic, mimetic—to cause offense in a cultic setting. Presumably Kinesias, unable to restrain his kakodaimonic urges, played the buffoon

discussion of Kannicht 1969, 2.160–163); Trag. adesp. TrGF F 375: ἀλλ’ εἴ σ’ ἔνυπνον φάντασμα φοβεῖ / χθονίας θ’ Ἑκάτης κῶμον ἐδέξω.

¹⁶⁵ Phot. and Lex. Seg. s.v. ἔμπουσα.

¹⁶⁶ Σ Ap. Rhod. 3.861, commenting on the poet’s use of Brimo for Hekate: Βριμὴ δὲ αὐτὴν προσηγόρευσε διὰ τὸ φοβερόν καὶ καταπληκτικὸν τῆς δαίμονος καὶ φάσματα ἐπιπέμπειν τὰ καλούμενα Ἑκαταῖα καὶ πολλάκις αὐτῆς μεταβάλλειν τὸ εἶδος, διὸ καὶ Ἑμπουσαν καλεῖσθαι.

¹⁶⁷ Clinton 1992, 87 n. 130 and Appendix 5.

¹⁶⁸ Richardson 1974, 84, 156, 295; Edwards 1986; Parker 1991, 15–16; Foley 1994, 61.

¹⁶⁹ See n. 99.

¹⁷⁰ For Aigina: Paus. 3.20; further sources and discussion Farnell 1896–1909 2.597 §7; Kern in RE 16 (1935), 1272; Laumonier 1958, 404–405 and n. 9; Kraus 1960, 49, 51, 66–69, 101, 111–112 with references.

and acted out (and/or had his chorus act out) self-defecation during a frightening underworld encounter with τὰ ἑκατά. Here we must bear in mind the strongly mimetic quality of the New Music dithyramb and citharodic nomos that, while arousing critical controversy, nevertheless had genuine popular appeal.¹⁷¹ Such ‘program-music’ (as it is usually termed) will have helped dithyrambic audiences achieve levels of imaginative engagement to rival comedy and tragedy.¹⁷² Of the various program-pieces we hear about, perhaps the best parallel for the rather graphic scenario I envision is the screaming, bestial pipe-music that Timotheos composed for the *Birth-Pangs of Semele* (PMG 792), that great Dionysian subject. But as Kinesias was no doubt playing for laughs, we should assume that he was helping himself to a standard comic scene. Consider, conversely, that comedy and tragedy were, from the mid-420s onwards, incorporating elements of dithyramb and the nomos, as seen especially in the use of monody.¹⁷³

I would also guess that Kinesias’ stunt involved a saffron-dyed robe, since Aristophanes’ defecation jokes about both Dionysos and Blepyros rely upon connecting τὸ πυρρὸν or (ὑπερ)πυρριᾶν with κροκωτός/κροκωτίδιον. As T. Power points out, these gender-bending outfits seem to have been purposefully adopted as a kind of uniform by some New Musicians. The star-aulete Antigeneidas wore one when accompanying Philoxenos’ dithyramb *The Komast*, and the *Suda* suggests that this was the start of a trend; Agathon is so portrayed by Aristophanes in *Thesmophoriazusae* (411).¹⁷⁴ It is an equally appropriate garb for Dionysos, who at the outset of *Frogs* is a Euripidean fanboy;¹⁷⁵ and for Kinesias himself in dithyrambic performance. Now, given that the New Music is so regularly critiqued by comedy, one might reasonably assume that these flashy costumes would have been comic targets with or without Kinesias (hence Agathon in *Thesmophoriazusae*). It is tempting to speculate, therefore, that Kinesias’ defecation stunt was actually a snarky dithyrambic *response* to a current comedic joke that these outfits “looked like shit”. A strong parallel for this kind of intertextual engagement and intergeneric rivalry is Aristophanes’ parody (in *Wealth*, ca. 388) of Philoxenos’ *Kyklops* (PMG 815–824; Fongoni 1–14), a dithyramb that, as T. Power has brilliantly shown, was itself a sophisticated intertextual parody of

¹⁷¹ For the mimetic program music of the New Dithyramb, Zimmermann 1992, 123–126; West 1992, 362–365; Power 2010, 138–143 et passim; Power 2013, 245; LeVen 2014, 190.

¹⁷² See generally Chapter 5 of LeVen 2014 (cf. 192: “Musical and visual *mimesis* (that is, reproduction by musical and visual means of aspects described by the narrative) complemented or enhanced the imaginary experience created by the text but ultimately depended on the narrative *mimesis*”).

¹⁷³ Csapo 1999–2000.

¹⁷⁴ Philoxenos: *Sud.* s.v. Ἀντιγενίδης (PMG 825; Fongoni 27): οὗτος ὑποδήμασι Μιλησίοις πρῶτος ἐχρήσατο καὶ κροκωτὸν ἐν τῷ Κωμαστῇ περιβάλλετο ἱμάτιον; Agathon: *Ar. Thesm.* 138. See further Power 2010, 510 and n. 269; Fongoni 2014, 127. For contemporary citharodic costuming, which intersects with that of the dithyrambists, Ercoles 2014.

¹⁷⁵ Dionysos wears one again in Aesch. *TrGF* 61; Cratin. fr. 40.2 (the *Dionysalexandros*); cf. Poll. 4.117 ὁ δὲ κροκωτὸς ἱμάτιον· Διόνυσος δὲ αὐτῷ ἐχρήτο; cf. the actor in Herod. 8.28, with the (vo)luminous note of Headlam 1922, 384–385.

with further references in ap. crit. For an interpretation of the *Frogs* garment in terms of initiatory rites-of-passage, Bowie 1993, 237–238, without excluding simultaneous implications about Dionysos’ “literary sensibilities”.

Timotheos' quasi-comedic citharodic nomos of the same name.¹⁷⁶ It is one of several indications that some New Musicians were integrating comedic or parodic elements into their multimodal compositions.¹⁷⁷

Our proposed spoof of Kinesias gains strength from the coherent vision of underworld topography and 'comic theology' that emerges from the *Frogs*' two references to the poet and the Empousa scene itself. Dionysos would consign Kinesias' 'pyrrhic' dancers to the field of "much muck / and ever-flowing shit" that one must cross just before reaching the initiates. It is precisely here that Dionysos fouls himself before the φάσμα Ἑκαταῖον.¹⁷⁸ And it is in the very next scene, when Dionysos at last reaches the initiates, that the enchanted comic circle issues its call for εὐφημία and banishes the Hekate-shitting Kinesias back into the βόρβορον πολλὸν / καὶ σκῶρ αἰίνων from which the god has just come, and from where he and Xanthias were able to make out the "breath of pipe-music" in the near distance.¹⁷⁹ I would see this as a kind of closing comment—a final judgment—on the foregoing parody. The underworld Kinesias is cast into a Tantalos-like torment, able to hear the mystic comic music but not attain it himself. After all, Kinesias' own scatological encounter with τὰ ἑκαταῖα would presuppose that he too—that is, his dithyrambic narrator—was 'on' a catabatic quest. By mirroring him ἐν βορβόρῳ, Aristophanes asserts that Kinesias is *uninitiated* in the mysteries, with σκῶρ αἰίνων added as a special punishment that Kinesias has brought upon himself. If Kinesias did indeed perpetrate the mimetic performance I propose, no doubt he caused genuine public outrage for 'shitting on' a basic premise of mystic theology. But Aristophanes prefers to characterize the Kinesian sacrilege as a violation of professional conduct. Whereas Dionysos fouling himself is perfectly acceptable in comedy, dithyramb (Aristophanes proclaims) is no place for such buffoonery. Hence the mystic comic chorus has no space for those who "enjoy buffoonish remarks when people are doing this out of season" (βωμολόχοις ἔπεσιν χαίρει μὴ 'ν καιρῷ τοῦτο ποιούντων, 358). Such types will be found wallowing with Kinesias.

Can we reasonably expect Aristophanes' audience to have pieced together such fleeting and diffuse references as I have proposed? I believe so. Aristophanes makes many such parodic remarks in passing, relying on the audience's recollection of notorious or otherwise prominent political and social events, including memorable performances in previous festivals. The little song in *Birds* mentioned above, where

¹⁷⁶ See esp. Power 2013; also Hordern 2002, 106–109; Fongoni 2014, 97–115.

¹⁷⁷ For the involvement of three comedians in the scandal of the Mysteries, and Kinesias' associate Apollonophanes, see above. For the quasi-comedic aspect of both Timotheos' and Philoxenos' *Kyklops* poems, see Hordern 2002, 106–109 (discussing Ar. *Poet.* 1148a11–18). Besides my proposal about Kinesias (see below), note that Timotheos also followed comic procedure in representing the barbarian speech of the Celaenaeon in the *Persians*: Hordern 2002, 204–206; Power 2013, 245 n. 36. Perhaps Diagoras himself was playing the buffoon: Σ Ar. *Ran.* 320: διθυραμβοποιὸς ὁ Διαγόρας ποιητὴς . . . ἢ κωμικὸς διθυραμβικὰ, τουτέστι Διονυσιακὰ δράματα ποιῶν; cf. ἔπα[ι]ξεν in Philodem. *De piet.* 18 (p. 85 Gomperz with Henrichs 1974 = Aristox. fr. 45/1 Wehrli), though this concerns a probably forged work (see above).

¹⁷⁸ Empousa herself, one should note, is subjected to an excremental rehabilitation with one leg made of cow dung (βολίτινον, 295), and perhaps even her "face all ablaze with fire" (πυρὶ γούν λάμπεται / ἅπαν τὸ πρόσωπον, 293–294), since πῦρ and πυρρός are cognate.

¹⁷⁹ Note the consistency of 154 and 312–313.

the vision of Sokrates and Khairephon in the underworld hearkens back to these same characters in *Clouds*, is of comparable scope and complexity to what I suggest for Kinesias in *Frogs*. And it was perhaps only two or three years earlier that Aristophanes presented the *Gerytades*, which staged an underworld journey undertaken by Kinesias and two other contemporary poets, Sannyrion and Meletos.¹⁸⁰ This comedy was not unlike *Frogs* in that it too enacted an underground descent as a means of exploring some contrast between poets living and dead. Unfortunately the surviving fragments leave the plot largely opaque. The most extensive one, however (156 = Ath. 12.551a–552b), informs us that the three ambassadors were chosen to represent dithyramb, tragedy, and comedy. It is also vital for once again connecting Kinesias with an excremental vision of underworld topography. The scene is the upperworld (ἐκεῖσε, 5), evidently after the embassy's return.¹⁸¹

- A. καὶ τίς νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκότου πύλας
ἔτλη κατελθεῖν;
- B. ἔν' ἀφ' ἐκάστης τῆς τέχνης
εἰλόμεθα κοινῇ γενομένης ἐκκλησίας,
οὓς ἦσμεν ὄντας ἀδοφοίτας καὶ θαμὰ
ἐκεῖσε φιλοχωροῦντας.
- A. εἰσὶ γάρ τινες
ἄνδρες παρ' ὑμῖν ἀδοφοῖται;
- B. νῆ Δία
μάλιστα γ'.
- A. ὥσπερ Θρακοφοῖται;
- B. πάντ' ἔχεις.
- A. καὶ τίνες ἂν εἶεν;
- B. πρῶτα μὲν Σαννυρίων
ἀπὸ τῶν τρυγῳδῶν, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν τραγικῶν χορῶν
Μέλητος, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν κυκλίων Κινησίας.
- A. ὥς σφόδρ' ἐπὶ λεπτῶν ἐλπίδων ὥχεῖσθ' ἄρα.
τούτους γὰρ ἦν πολλῶ ζυνέλθῃ ζυλλαβῶν
ὁ τῆς διαρροίας ποταμὸς οἰχίσεται.

¹⁸⁰ The usual dating of *Gerytades* (see opening remarks of Kassel-Austin) is actually quite uncertain, resting mainly on the assumption that the 'Agathonian' pipe-music of fr. 178 indicates that the poet had not yet departed for Macedon (Σ *Ran.* 85; Ael. *VH* 2.21), whereas *Frogs* 83–85 assumes his absence (cf. Sommerstein 1996, 163–164 ad 83). But the *Frogs* passage contains the surprising comic twist that Agathon has departed for "the feasts of the blessed" (εἰς μακάρων εὐωχίαν, 85)—i.e. the court of Arkhelaos was like heaven on earth. If Aristophanes used the same joke in *Gerytades*, the Agathonian pipe-music could have been set in the underworld (cf. Σ ad loc. ἦτοι τεθνηκὼς περὶ τὰς μακάρων ἐστὶ νήσους . . . ἢ ὅτι Ἀρχελάῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ Μακεδόνων κτλ), presumably at a banquet of the blessed (cf. Rohde 1907, 249 n. 18). Θρακοφοῖται may be a reference to Alkibiades' actions in 406 (see ap. crit. of Kassel-Austin). Whether *Gerytades* antedated *Frogs* or the reverse does not much affect my argument, though it seems rather more likely that the allusions to Kinesias in *Frogs* look back to the poet's actual underworld journey in *Gerytades* than the reverse. But as both refer (I argue) to Kinesias' own catabatic poetry, it may be that with *Gerytades* Aristophanes decided to develop more fully some of his jokes from *Frogs*.

¹⁸¹ Thus ἔτλη (2) and ὥχεῖσθ' (11); but cf. οἰχίσεται (13).

- A. And who has dared descend to the pit of the dead
and the gates of shadow?
- B. One from each craft,
we chose together meeting in assembly,
men we knew were Hades-rangers, often
fond of going there.
- A. You mean there are some
men among you who are Hades-rangers?
- B. Yes by Zeus,
absolutely.
- A. Like Thrace-rangers?
- B. You've nailed it.
- A. And who would they be?
- B. First Sannyrion
from the comic poets, then from the tragic choruses
Meletos, and from the dithyrambs Kinesias.
- A. Then how very slim the hopes you went upon.
For these men, if it comes in force,
the Diarrhoea River will snatch and bear away.

According to Athenaios (551a–c and *Epit.*), Aristophanes was picking on Sannyrion, Meletos, and Kinesias for their slight, corpse-like physiques—hence the closing joke about ‘slim hopes’ (λεπτῶν ἐλπίδων). Kinesias, Athenaios maintains, had the additional attraction of being diseased (νοσώδης). To support this the deipnosophist quotes the Lysias speech discussed above: Kinesias’ affliction had him “dying on a daily basis” (καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν ἀποθνήσκοντα), which the orator saw as divine punishment for the poet’s impiety. We also learn from Galen, who cites Plato Comicus, that Kinesias suffered from open sores that required regular cauterization (see below). These two qualities—emaciation and, for Kinesias, a wasting illness—must account, at least in part, for Aristophanes’ description of the catabatic ambassadors as ‘Hades-rangers’ (4).¹⁸² But ἄδοφοίτας καὶ θαμὰ / ἐκεῖσε φιλοχωροῦντας would be an equally apt description for a poet who, as a dithyrambist might, was fond (φιλο-) of catabatic explorations in his own poetry (cf. αἰοῖον ἀεροφοίταν in the dithyramb of Ion of Chios discussed above, PMG 745).¹⁸³ If this suggestion seems to privilege Kinesias over Sannyrion and Meletos, consider that Aristophanes himself puts the dithyrambopoios front and center by having his name trigger the magnificently ridiculous Diarrhoea River and its projected flood (no doubt swelling in sympathy with Kinesias’ presence).¹⁸⁴ The connection here with σκῶρ αἰίνων in *Frogs* is obvious. We must not

¹⁸² Hence the deduction in Hesych. s.v. ἄδοφοῖται· οἱ λεπτοὶ καὶ ἰσχυροὶ καὶ ἐγγὺς θανάτου ὄντες.

¹⁸³ See n. 33.

¹⁸⁴ For all we know Sannyrion and Meletos had also offered catabatic plays. Other comedies on this theme, besides *Frogs* and *Gerytades*, are attested for Kratinos (*Trophonios*, fr. 233–245) and Pherekrates (*Krapataloi*, fr. 84–104, evidently anticipating *Frogs* in featuring the dead Aiskhylos [Lowe 2008, 30]; and *Metalles*, fr. 113–116). Cf. Rohde 1907, 249 n. 17.

conclude, however, that this was “a traditional feature of the underworld.”¹⁸⁵ We have here rather yet another sample of the comedians’ annual jokes about Kinesias’ ἀσέβεια. Unlike the *Ecclesiazusae* scene, however, the *Gerytades* fragment joins with *Frogs* to corroborate the relevance of an underworld setting for Kinesias’ *original* defecation stunt.¹⁸⁶ Since *Gerytades* presupposes Kinesias’ shittyramb, which in turn entailed (on my argument) the dithyrambic poet’s own descent to Hades, it may be that in this comedy Aristophanes had Kinesias serve as a kind of mystagogue for his two travelling companions. That the play, like *Frogs*, offered some comic exploration of underworld topography is indicated by at least two further fragments. At one point (fr. 169) the mission encounters the cosmic ‘pole’ (πόλος) at its subterranean end, which one character misunderstands as a ὀρολόγιον (with the Strepsiades-like response “so what time does it say”?). We also know that *Gerytades* contained the same verse that in *Frogs* announces Dionysos’ arrival to the gates of Hades (fr. 176 = *Ran.* 436 [with Σ], ἀλλ’ ἴσθ’ ἐπ’ αὐτὴν τὴν θύραν ἀφιγμένος). Although critics have considered it possible that this verse in *Gerytades* referred to some dwelling in the land of the living,¹⁸⁷ it is surely no coincidence that the scene it introduces in *Frogs* contains a second self-defecation by Dionysos, this time terrified by the door-man (479). I suggest that Kinesias likewise soiled himself in the corresponding scene of *Gerytades*.

My proposal that ἄδοφοίτας implies special catabatic interests finds further support in a fragment of an unknown play by Plato Comicus.¹⁸⁸ Once again Kinesias was satirized for his physical qualities—a skeletal frame and stick-like limbs—as well as his running sores. But two further details are quite suggestive. Line 2 of the transmitted text calls Kinesias the son of Euagoras. But this reading is contradicted by the relatively reliable testimony of Plato, who in the *Gorgias* informs us that Kinesias was the son rather of the citharode Meles.¹⁸⁹ The text should therefore be altered to yield some significant metaphorical patronymic.¹⁹⁰ Kock’s proposal to read παῖς Οἰάγρου (followed by Kassel-Austin) would make Kinesias an Orpheus—or perhaps his sinister twin brother; this would make good sense if Kinesias had once—or more than once—enacted an underworld adventure. Alternatively, Kaibel thought of παῖς

¹⁸⁵ Sommerstein 1996, 159 ad 146; Henderson 2007, 187 n. 43 (quotation).

¹⁸⁶ Another fragment of the play (157) that is presumably relevant (so Bergk) refers to the indecorousness of contemporary symposia, in which one gets splashed not by wine but by vomit; soon, the speaker supposes, one may expect to be shat upon.

¹⁸⁷ See ap. crit. in Kassel-Austin.

¹⁸⁸ Pl. Com. fr. 200 (from Galen, *On the Aphorisms of Hippocrates* 18.1.149): μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ / παῖς Οἰάγρου ἔκ Πλευρίτιδος (Kock: Εὐαγόρου παῖς ἐκ Πλευρίτιδος codd.: ὁ Διαγόρου παῖς ἦλθεν οὐκ Πλευρίτιδος Kaibel) Κινησίας / σκελετός, ἄπυγος, καλάμινα σκέλη φορῶν, / φθόης προφήτης, ἐσχάρας κεκαυμένος / πλείστας ὕπ’ Εὐρυφῶντος ἐν τῷ σώματι.

¹⁸⁹ Pl. *Gorg.* 502a; the same Meles is called son of Peisias and “worst of all kitharodes” by Pherecr. fr. 6: (A.) φέρ’ ἴδω, κιθαρωδὸς τίς κάκιστος ἐγένετο; / (B.) ὁ Πεισίου Μέλῃς; also Ar. *Av.* 766 and Σ; Aristid. 3.231. Cf. Stephanēs 1988 no. 1630; Power 2010, 106, 486 n. 193; LeVen 2014, 28 Tab. 1.

¹⁹⁰ Such efforts will be justified even if one accepts the suggestion of Power 2013, 249, that the lineage Meles > Kinesias may be “a comic fiction—the world’s worst kitharode fathers the world’s most offensive dithyrambist—one perhaps reflective of a perceived affiliation between the more extreme practitioners of the two genres”. Παῖς Φιάγρου is unfortunately anachronistic.

Διαγόρου and a reference to none other than Diagoras of Melos.¹⁹¹ On this reading, Kinesias would become the notorious atheist's spiritual heir through their shared ἀσέβεια and dithyrambic activity, each cheapening the Mysteries in his own special way. Both readings would be compatible with the picture of Kinesias I have been developing. And in either case we have the wonderful description of Kinesias as φθόνης προφήτης, “prophet of decay”. Φθόνη of course suits the overall image of the decrepit poet.¹⁹² But προφήτης must equally allude to the traditional status of the wise-poet, and in particular leaders of mystic initiations. The opposition of mystic initiation to the underworld decay of the uninitiated is clearly drawn by the *Hymn to Demeter*:

Blessed is he among earthly mortals who has seen these (sc. the mysteries);
but he who is uninitiated in the holy rites, and who has no part therein, has never of
such things
his share—decaying (φθίμενος) as he is beneath the mouldering gloom.¹⁹³

Φθόνης προφήτης would thus invert the dithyrambic mission of offering insight on how to transcend the terrors of death. A ‘prophet of *decay*’ would be unable to lead his followers to the blessed realm of Kore, and leave them wasting and wallowing *en route*—just the fate of Kinesias in *Frogs*.

To conclude, it seems that Kinesias’ connection with the underworld was a recurrent motif in comedy, and that this is to be explained not solely in terms of his necrotic personal appearance (doubtless exaggerated) but also his professional poetic activity. He used the dithyramb, I suggest, for one or more novel interpretations of traditional myth-ritual narratives about death and revival. In doing so he was elaborating a trend begun by Diagoras of Melos and Ion of Chios. Such a background, I believe, must be the starting point for any assessment of what aspects of Hekate’s cult and myth stimulated Kinesias’ interest on the unforgettable occasion that he chose to play the buffoon. If the interpretive scenario I have developed is not conclusive in all its particulars, I hope at least to have put the quest on a more promising path.

Kinesias versus the *Khorēgia*; Kinesias in the *Lysistrata*

I will close by mentioning two final areas of interest in the biographical tradition. First is a comedy by Strattis called *Kinesias* that obviously must have dealt with the title figure in considerable detail. According to our scanty notices, Kinesias’ ἀσέβεια and παρανομία were its main focus.¹⁹⁴ Unfortunately we learn little about Kinesias himself from the surviving fragments, though these have been examined by several

¹⁹¹ See n. 187. In this case Kinesias himself would not have been named in the text, but have entered as a gloss; but the reference to him would be perfectly clear from the other descriptive words or larger context of the play (Galen guarantees the fragment’s relevance to Kinesias).

¹⁹² Cf. Strattis’ comic repurposing of the epithet Φθιώτα that Kinesias applied to Achilles: see n. 15 above.

¹⁹³ *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 480–482: ὄλβιος ὃς τάδ’ (sc. τὰ σεμνά) ὅπωπεν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων· / ὃς δ’ ἀτελὴς ἱερῶν, ὃς τ’ ἄμμορος, οὗ ποθ’ ὁμοίων / αἴσαν ἔχει φθιμένός περ ὑπὸ ζόφῳ εὐρώεντι.

¹⁹⁴ Harp. Gramm. s.v. Κινησίας . . . οὗ μέμνηται πολλάκις οἱ κωμικοὶ καὶ Στράτις ὅλον δρᾶμα ποιήσας εἰς αὐτὸν, ὅπερ ἐπεγράφη Κινησίας, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὴν ἀσέβειαν αὐτοῦ κωμῶδει.

commentators in detail.¹⁹⁵ The one exception is a notice in the Aristophanic scholia to *Frogs* that Kinesias was described as χοροκτόνος, the ‘chorus-killer’. One might suppose this epithet due to the deadly quality of his music or hyperkinetic dance; or even that he dragged his choruses through repeated underworld narratives. But a scholiast claims that Kinesias earned the title after he “stripped away the χορηγία (sc. from the city) once and for all (καθάπαξ περιεῖλε Κινησίας τὰς χορηγίας, Σ *Ran.* 404). This notice is puzzling, since we know that the χορηγία persisted down through the fourth century. Scholars have therefore sought some connection with a slightly earlier notice in the same scholion, which cites Aristotle for the institution of a συγχορηγία in the archonship of Kallias—that is 406/405, when the final crisis of the Peloponnesian War must have caused Athens to reconsider its liturgical priorities. A. Meriani, for instance, proposed that what Kinesias did was to initiate a return to the traditional single-payer system; but that, given the dire straits in which Athens found itself after 404, the χορηγία never returned to its former glory.¹⁹⁶ In any event, if there is anything real behind the scholiast’s report, it raises interesting questions about Kinesias’ stature in Athenian politics, and perhaps suggests that professional rivalries between dithyrambic and dramatic poets may sometimes have spilled out beyond metatextual sparring into the actual marketplace.

A final area of considerable interest is the appearance of Kinesias in the famous scene of *Lysistrata*, where he is tormented by his wife Myrrhine. Already Maas insisted that the name was uncommon enough that Aristophanes’ audience must have identified this character with the dithyrambic poet.¹⁹⁷ Since Myrrhine is often associated with the homonymous priestess of Athena Nike, some have even supposed that the latter was married to the historical Kinesias.¹⁹⁸ Beyond that, however, commentators have repeatedly denied any significant links, maintaining only that the name ‘Kinesias’ has been chosen simply for an appropriate etymology via κινεῖν, in its common sexual sense.¹⁹⁹ Yet even this obvious point is probably more interesting than it may seem. For Kinesias himself had very likely already exploited the semantic range of his name, by connecting it with the vigorous and elaborate “movement” of his dithyrambic choreography. Several ancient sources, indeed, offer this as an explanation for his name.²⁰⁰ At first glance this etymology may seem an anachronism of ancient scholarship. But consider that Kinesias’ own father was called by the musical name of Meles (Plato), and was himself a professional musician—the worst of all citharodes, according to Plato Comicus (fr. 6). It would not be surprising if Meles gave his son a speaking-name in anticipation of a musical career; there are many such examples of Greek musicians. I propose therefore that Aristophanes, by staging

¹⁹⁵ Meriani 1995; Orth 2009, 100–129; cf. Fiorentini 2009.

¹⁹⁶ Meriani 1995, 29–33.

¹⁹⁷ Maas 1922.

¹⁹⁸ MacDowell 1995, 243–244. Identification of Myrrhine: Papadimitriou 1948–1949.

¹⁹⁹ E.g. Henderson 1991, 8–9.

²⁰⁰ See n. 139. Κίνησις is commonly used in ancient discussions of dance, and especially the dithyramb: see e.g. Σ Pl. *Resp.* 394c (ὁ διθύραμβος . . . κεκινημένος); Ar. *Pol.* 1342b (Bacchic/dithyrambic); Aristox. fr. 103, 108 (= Ath. 630c, 631b); Procl. *Chrest.* ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 320b12 (διθύραμβος κεκινημένος); Sud. s.v. πυρρίχη; etc.

Kinesias as wanting to κινεῖν, has in fact given a comic twist to a professional etymology that Kinesias himself had already promoted as a dithyrambic choreographer.

Conclusion

In this paper I have surveyed the key themes in the material for Kinesias. I have offered a number of new contextualizations in the attempt to consolidate and refine our understanding of this elusive figure. Although considerable speculation is unavoidable under the circumstances, nevertheless I hope to have developed a more coherent and interesting image of Kinesias than has been achieved previously.

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